

**Voices From Around the World Sourcebook:
A Large Compendium of Lessons
George Demetrion
Literacy Volunteers of Greater Hartford
30 Arbor Street
Hartford, CT 06106**

www.lvgh.org
George.Demetrion@lvgh.org
August 11, 2003

**Introduction
A Word to Teachers**

The instructional materials in this collection have been developed from student narratives created at Literacy Volunteers of Greater Hartford (LVGH) during the past ten years. These include various anthologies of student essays and oral history narratives. These original texts created by the program's ESOL and Basic Literacy students stand alone as a valuable source of instructional material. To make them user-friendlier for students and tutors, I have organized them topically and have added questions for discussion and other instructional formatting. There are more questions for each lesson than may be feasible to use in a given lesson. Feel free to select from or add questions of your own. Sometimes only a single question is needed to get an excellent discussion going. There is also a **Fill in the Blank** section for each of the lessons, which our students have enjoyed, and a vocabulary list placed in a chart. The first column has the word. The second column has the word broken down into syllables, based generally, on how the word is usually

pronounced. The third column is for sentence writing using the word.

Voices From Around the World includes narratives from students who have lived in urban and rural settings in the United States and from all the major cultures and geographical areas that comprise the student population of Literacy Volunteers of Greater Hartford. The lessons range widely in terms of level of reading needed to be able to work with them effectively. There is plenty to select from, whether you are working with beginning, intermediate, or advanced Basic Literacy or ESOL students. All of the selections are interchangeable for both groups.

Contents



Introduction	p. i
Voices from Puerto Rico	p. 1
Voices From Latin and South America	p. 57
Voices from the West Indian Islands	p. 92
Voices From the American South	p. 122
Voices from Urban America	p. 152
Voices from Eastern Europe	p. 205
Voices from South East Asia	p. 236

Voices from Puerto Rico from Hartford, CT
George Demetrion (Editor)
Manager of Community-Based programming
Literacy Volunteers of Greater Hartford

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Lesson One

Lesson Two

Lesson Three

Lesson Four

Lesson Five

Lesson Six

Lesson Seven

Lesson Eight

Lesson Nine

Lesson Ten

**Voices from Puerto Rico from Hartford, CT
George Demetrion (Editor)
Manager of Community-Based programming
Literacy Volunteers of Greater Hartford**

Lesson One

I was born in Puerto Rico and my town is Cidra. I went to school in Cidra with my three brothers and four sisters. When I was thirteen, I started working making kitchen cabinets. I did this while still attending school. A few years later I worked in construction building houses. It would take three months to build one house.

When I was thirty years old I went to work for my brother in his restaurant in Cidra. I worked with him for three years and then I went to night school and I worked at a factory during the day.

My father lived in Cidra and had a big farm. I used to visit him and help him on the farm.

I used to visit my brother on vacation in Long Island. I lived in Long Island for about six months in 1975 and returned to Puerto Rico. I recently moved to Hartford in May of 1993.

**Jose Santiago
Arbor Street Reading Center**

Fill in the Blanks

I was born in Puerto Rico and my _____ is Cidra. I went to school in Cidra with my three brothers and four _____. When I was thirteen, I started working making kitchen _____. I did this while

still _____ school. A few years later I worked in construction _____ houses. It would take three months to build one _____.

When I was thirty years old I went to _____ for my brother in his restaurant in Cidra. I worked with him for three years and then I went to night _____ and I worked at a factory during the _____.

My father _____ in Cidra and had a big farm. I used to visit him and _____ him on the farm.

I used to _____ my brother on vacation in Long Island. I lived in Long Island for about six _____ in 1975 and returned to Puerto Rico. I recently _____ to Hartford in May of 1993.

Words	Syllables	Write Sentence
thirteen	thir-teen (2 syllables)	
kitchen	kit-chen (2 syllables)	
construction	con-struc-tion (3 syllables)	
thirty	thir-ty (2 syllables)	
restaurant	res-taur-ant (3 syllables)	
vacation	va-ca-tion (3 syllables)	
recently	re-cent-ly (3 syllables)	

Questions

1. Describe Jose's life while growing up in Cidra?
2. What kind of work did he do?
3. How did he learn about life in the U.S. mainland?
4. In what ways does your life compare with Jose's?
5. In what ways is your life different?

Lesson Two

The following three stories tell a little bit about life in Puerto Rico, but focus mostly on living in Hartford.

I left Puerto Rico in 1991 because I needed to change my life. I needed to learn English. I lived in San Lorenzo in Puerto Rico. San Lorenzo is a city. I worked in the factory making women's clothes. Work is no good in Puerto Rico. I did not want to work in a factory in the United States. I wanted another type of job, maybe as a nurse.

I have six brothers and two sisters. They went to school. I was the oldest. My father wanted me to stay at home all the time to wash, cook, and clean. I needed to continue with school first, to learn English, and then to become a nurse or counselor.

Maria Pomales Arbor Street Reading Center

My name is David Nieves. I am from Puerto Rico. I came from Caguas. Caguas is a city. I came to the United States around 1978. I came to make some money. Jobs in Puerto Rico do not pay too much. I worked in the Progreso Supermarket in Caguas. I worked in the meat department.

First I came to Detroit. I was there for two years. I worked on a farm picking mushrooms. I went to Philadelphia for another job. It was on a farm, too, but they had different kinds of vegetables. I was in Philadelphia one year.

Then I moved to Hartford to see my mother. She lived on Sigourney Street. I moved in with her. I worked in a factory for fifteen years. I worked at Foodway National on Silas Deane Highway in Wethersfield. I was a machine operator. I got laid off on September 15, 1992.

I don't work now. I can't find another job. I want to find another job.

David Nieves
Arbor Street Reading Center

My name is Ulises Talaba. I am from Puerto Rico. I lived in Byamon. It's a big city. I came here in '84 after high school. I came to Hartford because my sister asked if I wanted to work in the factory.

I lived on Elliot Street and later moved to White Street. I worked in the same factory as David in the Sauce Department. They closed the factory and moved to Boise, Idaho for the taxes. They laid me off.

I took training as a chef. I finished the training and filled out an application for Spaghetti Warehouse, Chili's, Hooters. They did not call me.

Now I am employed. I'm working part time for a food service. I serve lunch for schools. I need a full time job to pay the rent or hit the lotto. I want to learn more English. I have many friends—Jamaicans, Greek, Vietnamese, Columbian, Peruvian, and Gringos.

Ulisis Talaba
Arbor Street Reading Center

Fill in the Blanks

My _____ is David Nieves. I am from Puerto Rico. I _____ from Caguas. Caguas is a city. I came to the United States around 1978. I came to _____ some money. Jobs in Puerto Rico do not _____ too much. I worked in the Progreso Supermarket in Caguas. I worked in the _____ department.

First I _____ to Detroit. I was there for two _____. I worked on a farm _____ mushrooms. I went to Philadelphia for another job. It was on a farm, too, but they had different _____ of vegetables. I was in Philadelphia one _____.

Then I _____ to Hartford to see my mother. She _____ on Sigourney Street. I _____ in with her. I worked in a factory for fifteen _____. I worked at Foodway National on Silas Deane Highway in Wethersfield. I was a _____ operator. I got laid off on September 15, 1992.

I don't work now. I can't find _____ job. I want to find another _____.

Words	Syllables	Write Sentence
learn	learn (one syllable)	
factory	fac-tor-y (3 syllables)	
another	a-noth-er (3 syllables)	

continue	con-tin-ue (3 syllables)	
department	de-part-ment (3 syllables)	
mushrooms	mush-rooms (2 syllables)	
different	dif-fer-ent (3 syllables)	
operator	op-er-a-tor (3 syllables)	
because	be-cause (2 syllables)	
application	ap-pli-ca-tion (4 syllables)	
training	train-ing (2 syllables)	
friends	friends (one syllable)	

Questions

1. Why did Maria, David, and Ullis come to the U.S. mainland?
2. What kind of work did each of them do in Puerto Rico?
3. What kind of work did each of them do in Hartford?
4. What kind of work did you do in your homeland?
5. What kind of work did you do in the U.S?

6. What kind of work did you want to do when you came to the U.S?
7. If you are still working or would like to work, what skills do you need to get the kind of job you want?
8. Name at least three reasons why work is important to you?

Lesson Three

The following three essays were written by Marilyn De Jesus. Marilyn studied ESL at the Arbor Street Reading Center.

Life in Cayey, Puerto Rico

I was born in Caguas at the hospital, but I grew up in Cayey and lived there with my family while I was in Puerto Rico. Cayey is a small town. It's in central Puerto Rico.

In Cayey, there was a lot of American industry. There was a Coca Cola plant. There was also the Winston Plastic Company and a textile factory that specialized in making graduation gowns.

I had a lot of friends in my town. We played volleyball, basketball and baseball. We went to parties and danced a lot. Dancing was my favorite hobby.

I spent time not only with my friends, but with my mother, brother and little sister. My mother made many cakes for parties and holidays. In Cayey there are no beaches, but Puerto Rico has many beautiful beaches. One of the best universities in Puerto Rico is in Cayey.

High School in Cayey

Cayey has two high schools: a general high school and a vocational high school. I was in the vocational high school and studied accounting, but I didn't finish. I only completed the eleventh grade because I didn't like accounting. To start another program at the vocational school, I would have had to have started at the tenth grade. I could

have gone to the general high school, but I didn't want to go because there were too many bad people there in gangs and doing drugs. That was the reason I didn't finish high school.

Coming to the U.S.A.

I came to the U.S.A. in November, 1991. Education was one of the reasons. I wanted to finish high school. I wanted to learn English and I wanted to study something. I wanted to learn how to design clothes.

The economic situation is better here than in Puerto Rico. There are more opportunities to find jobs. I have relatives here in Hartford, New York and New Jersey. That's also why I came here.

Word	Syllable	Write Sentence
hospital	hos-pi-tal (3 syllables)	
industry	in-dus-try (2 syllables)	
beaches	beach-es (2 syllables)	
beautiful	beaut-i-ful (3 syllables)	
general	gen-er-al (3 syllables)	
vocational	vo-ca-tion-al (4 syllables)	

design	de-sign (2 syllables)	
clothes	clothes (one syllable)	
situation	sit-u-a-tion (4 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

I was _____ in Caguas at the hospital, but I grew up in Cayey and lived there with my _____ while I was in Puerto Rico. Cayey is a small _____. It's in central Puerto Rico.

In Cayey, there was a lot of American _____. There was a Coca Cola plant. There was also the Winston Plastic Company and a textile factory that specialized in making _____ gowns.

I had a lot of _____ in my town. We played volleyball, basketball and _____. We went to parties and _____ a lot. Dancing was my favorite hobby.

I spent time not only with my friends, but with my _____, brother and little sister. My mother made many _____ for parties and _____. In Cayey there are no beaches, but Puerto Rico has many beautiful beaches. One of the best _____ in Puerto Rico is in Cayey.

Questions

1. What was the economy like in Cayey?
2. What was the economy like in the town where you grew up?

3. What was Marilyn's social life like in Cayey? Describe it.
4. What was your social life like in the town where you grew up?
5. What was high school like for Marilyn? Describe it?
6. What was school like for you?
7. Why did Marilyn come to the U.S. mainland?
8. What did you like about Marilyn's story?
9. What would you like to ask her?
10. In what ways does Marilyn's story remind you of your own even if your story and her story were very different?
11. If you were to write a letter to Marilyn, what would you like to say?

Lesson Four

The following stories were completed in Richard Griffis' ESL class held at the Milner Elementary School.

Eliseo Cruz's Story

One morning, Eliseo Cruz brought two very large photographs of himself to our class. Each was in color and stood three *feet high. He was shown standing confidently with muscles ripping across his chest, arms and legs. We set them on chairs, so that we could take all the time we wanted to look at this handsome young man.

I competed four times to be "Mr. Puerto Rico." I trained myself in a gym and I tried hard to win. I worked out every day for three hours. I practiced so I would have good health. I trained different muscles. I repeated my exercises over and over, many times. I used small dumb bells, one in each hand. I did four sets and I did each set ten times. I lifted 200 pounds ten times.

I did not get the title of "Mr. Puerto Rico" because I was getting divorced from my wife and I could not compete very well. In my mind I had a problem.

I began training In July, 1977 in San Tursie. I was twenty-five years old. When I started I weighed 230 pounds. I ate tuna fish and water for one month. Tuna fish and water have no fat. Then I weighed 190 pounds and my waist was twenty-eight inches round. Today I weigh 220 pounds.

I didn't continue to practice because I did not have the money. It cost forty dollars every month at the gym.

I won three titles. They were: "Dorado", "Toa Baja", and the "Atlas Gym" title.

Georgiana Perez's Story

Georgiana brought her son Jonathan, to our class one morning. She also brought two small and brightly colored paintings. She painted them herself, she said. The one with a wide river and a waterfall was painted just two days before. We enjoyed having Jonathan with us, but we spent the whole time looking at the paintings and talking about colors and the way houses, trees and water looks in Puerto Rico.

I painted my first picture in 1980. I was twenty-nine years old. In Puerto Rico I went to a school to see examples of good paintings. It was in Caguas.

I liked to draw when I was a young girl. I always liked painting and drawing very much. I like to paint palm trees with cocoa nuts, and houses. I also like to paint people. I paint any time, in the morning or in the afternoon. I paint when I see something in my mind. I have five pictures in my house that I painted. They have different styles. In Puerto Rico my mother has more pictures. I don't know how many.

I would like to go to school for painting. I want to know how to paint flowers. I also want to paint people. I want to paint people's faces so well they look like a photograph.

When I am lonely I like to paint. Then I feel proud. I am happy when I finish a picture. My friends say, "I like that. Give me one!" My husband likes my paintings, too. He says, "Don't give them away."

Felicita Rios' Story

Felicita helps in the soup kitchen at La Iglesia de Dios, Inc. It is a pentecostal church on 1313 Main Street in Hartford.

Sometimes eight, sometimes ten people from our church work in the soup kitchen. There is one leader. Two men and two women do the cooking. The rest of the people serve the food. Sometimes I cook and sometimes I serve coffee and clear the tables.

The kitchen is open on Sundays from eleven o'clock to two o'clock. Sometimes seventy people come and sometimes over eighty. One day 102 people came. Most of them were homeless. They stay in the shelters. They have to go out of the shelters every morning at six o'clock.

The people sign their names on a paper when they come in. Then they sit down and eat. When they finish eating, they get up and leave. They sit at long tables. We come and serve them.

There are men and women of all different ages. Many of them do not have families. Many of them also have alcohol and drug problems. Some people come back every Sunday. New people come too.

We cook rice and beans, vegetables and chicken. We serve ice tea, fruit punch, and coffee.

The cooks prepare a "todo junto" [everything together] in big pots. They put oil in the big pot and then put in peppers, garlic, onion, celery, potatoes, carrots, and chicken. They cut the chicken into medium sized pieces and put in three or four small cans of tomato

sauce. Then they put the lid on the pot and cook it slowly on a low fire for thirty to forty minutes.

In our church the children and youths are in classes on Saturdays from ten o'clock to twelve o'clock. On Saturday nights at seven o'clock everybody comes to the church to study, pray and sing.

On some Sundays I am not there. I visit my four sons in Willimantic and we all go fishing. We are a big family.

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
muscles	Mus-cles (2 syllables)	
practiced	prac-ticed (2 syllables)	
repeated	re-pea-ted (3 syllables)	
different	dif-fer-ent (3 syllables)	
compete	com-pete (2 syllables)	
lonely	lon-e-ly (3 syllables)	
homeless	home-less (2 syllables)	
shelter	shel-ter (2 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

Sometimes eight, sometimes ten people from our church work in the _____ kitchen. There is _____ leader. Two men and two women _____ the cooking. The rest of the _____ serve the food. Sometimes I cook and _____ I serve coffee and clear the _____.

The _____ is open on Sundays from eleven o'clock to two o'clock. Sometimes seventy people come and _____ over eighty. One _____ 102 people came. Most of them were _____. They _____ in the shelters. They have to go out of the shelters every _____ at six o'clock.

The people _____ their names on a paper when they come in. Then they _____ down and eat. When they _____ eating, they get up and leave. They sit at long _____. We come and serve them.

There are men and women of all _____ ages. Many of them do not have _____. Many of them also have alcohol and _____ problems. Some people come back every Sunday. New _____ come too.

We cook rice and _____, vegetables and _____. We serve ice tea, fruit punch, and coffee.

The cooks _____ a "todo junto" [everything together] in big pots. They put _____ in the big pot and then put in peppers, garlic, onion, celery, _____, carrots, and chicken. They cut the chicken into medium sized pieces and put in three or four small cans of tomato sauce. Then they put the _____ on the pot and cook it slowly on a low fire for _____ to forty minutes.

In our church the children and youths are in classes on Saturdays from ten o'clock to twelve o'clock. On Saturday _____ at seven o'clock _____ comes to the church to study, pray and sing.

On some Sundays I am not there. I visit my four sons in Willimantic and we all go fishing. We are a big _____.

Questions

1. How did Eliseo prepare to become "Mr. Puerto Rico?"
2. What made it hard for him to concentrate on the title?
3. In what ways do you think Eliseo benefitted by training for the title even though he did not become Mr. Puerto Rico?"
4. Do you think the effort was worth it? Why or why not?
5. How important is discipline and training to achieving your goals? Explain?
6. If you were to write a letter to Eliseo what would you say?
7. What kind of painting did Georgiana like?
8. Why do you think she liked painting so much?
9. Should Georgiana give her paintings away like her friends say or should she keep them for herself like her husband says?
10. What is a special thing you like best to do?
11. How does Felicita's church support the needs of the community?
12. How important do you think it is for religious groups to provide this type of service to the community?
13. Besides a soup kitchen or shelter, what are some other ways religious groups can help meet community needs?
14. In what ways do you think Felicita benefitted by volunteering in the kitchen?
15. What are some ways that you have volunteered?
16. What did you like about it?
17. What didn't you like about it?
18. In what ways can volunteers help improve society?

19. In what ways can government help improve society?

20. If you were to write a letter to *Georgiana* or *Felicita*, what would you say?

Lesson Five

I was born in Puerto Rico on August 22, 1955. I have eight brothers and only two sisters. I don't want to remember my father. He was a very bad person. But my mother wasn't like him. She was and still is a nice person.

I remember my mother used to wash clothes and iron for other people, so we could have something to eat and so we could go to school. I felt sorry for her because she used to iron at night and she used to do everything by herself. Later, my mother got sick and she had to split my brothers and sisters. The three youngest ones went to stay with my grandmother and the others decided to stay with their father. One of my sisters went to stay with my aunt and the other one was staying with a rich woman. I stayed with my mother to help her with my other brothers. When my mother got better she went to get all my brothers and sisters. We moved to a place far away because my father used to hit my mother.

At last, my mother found a job as a janitor, and so we kept going on in life. In July 1984, my brother died in a car accident. It was really hard for us to accept his death, and my mother lost her job. My sisters finished school. The youngest one works at a casino in Atlantic City and the other is a secretary for a lawyer and is still studying. And for my brothers, one is a policeman in Puerto Rico and the rest of my brothers do different things in the community.

I didn't finish school. I ran away from home when I was sixteen and now I have five children. In 1989 I came to the U.S. to stay. I like it better in Hartford. I feel better here because I am learning English. I hope I can learn the language so I can help older people who

need help. I do need to thank my teacher Ms. Schonberger because she is helping me learn English. She is a great teacher. She is a nice person to me and the rest of the students. I hope one day to be what I always wanted to be.

Teresa Rodriguez
Clark Family Resource Center

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
eight	eight (one syllable)	
remember	re-mem-ber (3 syllables)	
clothes	Clothes (one syllable)	
decided	de-ci-ded (3 syllables)	
accident	ac-ci-dent (3 syllables)	
casino	ca-si-no (3 syllables)	
secretary	sec-re-tar-y (4 syllables)	
community	com-mun-i-ty (4 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

I was born in Puerto Rico on August 22, 1955. I have eight _____ and only two sisters. I don't want to _____ my father. He was a very bad _____. But my mother wasn't like him. She was and still is a _____ person.

I remember my mother used to wash clothes and iron for other people, so we could have _____ to eat and so we could go to school. I felt sorry for her because she used to iron at _____ and she used to do everything by herself. Later, my mother got sick and she had to split my brothers and _____. The three youngest ones went to stay with my grandmother and the others decided to stay with their _____. One of my sisters went to stay with my aunt and the other one was staying with a _____ woman. I stayed with my mother to help her with my other brothers. When my mother got _____ she went to get all my brothers and sisters. We moved to a place far away because my father used to _____ my mother.

At last, my mother found a job as a _____, and so we kept going on in life. In July 1984, my brother died in a car accident. It was really hard for us to accept his death, and my mother lost her job. My sisters finished school. The youngest one works at a _____ in Atlantic City and the other is a secretary for a lawyer and is still studying. And for my brothers, one is a policeman in Puerto Rico and the rest of my brothers do different things in the _____.

I didn't finish school. I ran away from home when I was sixteen and now I have five children. In 1989 I came to the U.S. to stay. I like it better in Hartford. I feel better here because I am learning English. I hope I can learn the _____ so I can help older people

who need help. I do need to thank my teacher Ms. Schonberger because she is helping me learn _____. She is a great teacher. She is a nice person to me and the rest of the students. I hope one day to be what I always wanted to be.

Questions

1. What picture do you have in your mind about Teresa's mother?
2. What influence do you think Teresa's mother had on her?
3. Why do you think Teresa ran away from home as a teenager?
4. How important is it for Teresesa to speak English?
5. What does Teresa's story remind you of in your life?
6. If you were going to write a letter to Tersa what would you say?

Lesson Six

I come from Aguadilla, Puerto Rico. I have five sisters and four brothers, but my mother wasn't their mother. I have another brother and he is in Puerto Rico, too. He and I grew up together. My mother raised us alone. It was hard for her. When she was seventeen years old she came to Brooklyn, N.Y. She lived there for thirteen years. She married and had my brother.

Then they came to Puerto Rico and my brother was six years old when she met my father and had a second baby (me). When I was three years old I can remember my grandmother. I loved her. She was very loving. She made candies for sale. She made food for sale, too. My grandfather was an angry man. All the time he drank beer and came to the house to fight with my grandmother. When she died, he sold the house and my mother took us to another house.

We moved to the city. I liked the house, the people, and the school. I was eight years old. We stayed for four years. Then we moved to another house in the country. I liked it there, too, especially the school. I made many friends and in this place I had my first job. I was a baby-sitter and housekeeper. When I was sixteen years old I worked in a hospital. I did a job like nursing for three years. I went to high school, too. I worked and studied at same time.

My brother got married and my mother and I stayed alone. I met my first husband during this time. I worked in a store like K-Mart. My mother was sick and died after I married. I felt bad. I didn't want to live. The time passed.

I had a lot of problems with my husband. He was an alcoholic and didn't know how to get out of this vice. At last, I divorced him and I

had my son, "Miguel." When he was one year old, I met a good man. He was visiting his mother's house in Puerto Rico. For two weeks he had his vacation. He lived in Cleveland, Ohio. He had been living for twenty-five years in the U.S. I met him at my mother's house. His mother was my best friend.

I came with him and my son to Hartford. My husband already had a job and apartment. I spent four years in Hartford. When I came here I didn't know how to speak English. But I understood the people when they talked because in Puerto Rico I watched movies in English and studied English grammar, too.

I wanted to study English and my friend told me about Literacy Volunteers and I called Judy Lopez. She told me the date and place to go. I went to Clark School and I met Steve [a former program manager at LVGH] and next time met my teacher Pam. She's very nice. She told me, "You are intelligent but you talk too much." She's all right. She has a reason to say this. I learned a lot of English with her. My classmates are very friendly. Bonnie told me about Literacy Volunteers. Modesto is nice. Teresa is nice and Silvia, too. I had a good experience with Literacy Volunteer. I'm glad to be here.

Zoraida Jimenez
Clark Family Resource Center

Words	Syllables	Write Sentence
raised	raised (one syllable)	
seventeen	sev-en-teen (three syllables)	
thirteen	thir-teen (two syllables)	
remember	re-mem-ber (3 syllables)	
angry	an-gry (2 syllables)	
fight	fight (one syllable)	
especially	e-spec-i-a-lly (4 syllables)	
sixteen	six-teen (two syllables)	
nursing	nur-sing (2 syllables)	
husband	hus-band (2 syllables)	
alcoholic	al-co-hol-ic (4 syllables)	
intelligent	in-tel-li-gent (4 syllables)	
experience	ex-per-i-ence (4 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

I come from Aguadilla, Puerto Rico. I have five sisters and four brothers, but my _____ wasn't their mother. I have another brother and he is in Puerto Rico, too. He and I grew up _____. My mother raised us alone. It was _____ for her. When she was seventeen years old she came to Brooklyn, N.Y. She lived there for thirteen _____. She married and had my brother.

Then they came to Puerto Rico and my brother was six years old when she met my father and had a second baby (me). When I was three years old I can _____ my grandmother. I loved her. She was very loving. She made _____ for sale. She made food for sale, too. My grandfather was an _____ man. All the time he drank beer and came to the house to _____ with my grandmother. When she died, he sold the house and my mother took us to _____ house.

We moved to the city. I liked the house, the people, and the school. I was eight years old. We _____ for four years. Then we moved to another house in the country. I liked it there, too, _____ the school. I made many friends and in this place I had my first job. I was a baby-sitter and housekeeper. When I was sixteen years old I _____ in a hospital. I did a job like nursing for three years. I went to high _____, too. I worked and studied at same time.

My brother got married and my mother and I _____ alone. I met my first husband during this time. I worked in a store like K-Mart. My mother was sick and _____ after I married. I felt bad. I didn't _____ to live. The time passed.

I had a lot of _____ with my husband. He was an alcoholic and didn't know how to get out of this vice. At last, I _____ him and I had my son, "Miguel." When he was one year old, I met a good man. He was visiting his mother's house in Puerto Rico. For two weeks he had his vacation. He lived in Cleveland, Ohio. He had been living for twenty-five years in the U.S. I met him at my mother's _____. His mother was my best _____.

I came with him and my son to Hartford. My husband already had a job and apartment. I spent four _____ in Hartford. When I came here I didn't know how to speak English. But I _____ the people when they talked because in Puerto Rico I watched movies in English and _____ English grammar, too.

I wanted to study English and my friend told me about Literacy Volunteers and I called Judy Lopez. She told me the date and place to go. I went to Clark School and I met Steve [a former program manager at LVGH] and next time _____ my teacher Pam. She's very nice. She told me, "You are _____ but you talk too much." She's all right. She has a reason to say this. I learned a lot of English with her. My classmates are very friendly. Bonnie told me about Literacy Volunteers. Modesto is nice. Teresa is nice and Silvia, too. I had a good _____ with Literacy Volunteer. I'm glad to be here.

Questions

1. What were the significant events in Zoraida's life? Make a list of them.
2. How do you think what she experienced growing up influenced her life as an adult?

3. Describe your life growing up as a child and a teenager. What were the significant events for you during that time period?
4. What made these events significant?
5. In what ways has your adult life been influenced by your younger years?
6. In what ways have you changed?
7. In what ways was Zoraida's adulthood influenced by her younger years?
8. In what ways did she break against her childhood influences and family patterns?
9. What does that say about her?

Lesson Seven

In 1952 when I was born in San Lorenzo, Puerto Rico, my parents lived on a small farm where they had an old wooden house. My father was a farmer and my mother took care of my older brother and me, and helped my father in the farm.

During that time we did not have electricity because that service was not available in the country. We got water from the river and we also washed our clothes there. We lived like that for many years until my father migrated to the United States to work in the fields. He came home at the end of every year with money and every time before he left, he got my mother pregnant.

At last, my father was able to buy a better house and a bigger farm and we started living in better conditions. He did not go back to the United States and started working his own farm. Little by little he bought animals and our situation got better.

My aunts and uncles lived near by, and together with my parents, worked to have better conditions on the farm.

Then my brother and I started going to school. My older brother could not continue his studies because he had some problems with his eyes and other illnesses. During that time, we never went to see the doctors and our parents took care of us with medicines made out of different plants.

I remember when my father used to sit with me in a hammock during the afternoon and he would teach me how to write my name and

the numbers, one through ten, and how to read. That is why when I went to school for the first time, they skipped me to the second grade. During that time there was no kindergarten. So I started at the second grade and attended school until the third grade. Because my parents needed to send my two sisters to school, I had to stay in the house and help them with the chores.

My parents received letters from the school asking them to send me back, but with the poor conditions at my house, I could not go back. My parents did not have enough money to send all of us to school. Time passed that way and we became ten brothers and sisters.

I was eleven when I went to live with nuns at a home for old people, but my mother got very sick with cancer and I had to go back home to take care of my brothers and sisters with the help of my father. The youngest was only two weeks old. I took care of them for nine months.

During that time Social Services came to my house for my younger brothers and sisters. They took five of them away and I still haven't seen the three younger ones. When my brothers and sisters left, I went back with the nuns, and my father stayed with the other four.

Later on, I started regular classes in Hato Rey, Puerto Rico. For some months I studied half a day and worked at home until I completed seventh grade. Then I took a sewing course for three months. I took my brothers and sisters with me to the home and my father got married with another woman who had ten kids.

After some years my father and his wife went to live in Chicago and we stayed in Puerto Rico. Since we did not have anywhere to go,

we continued to work at the home because my father sold the farm, the house and everything that belonged to us.

After two of my sisters got married, I took the money I had saved, and went on a trip to Mexico for a month which was really interesting and that I will never forget!

When I came back I stayed with the nuns and I was there for a couple of more months. Then one of my sisters asked me to move in with her. After that I started to work with different families, taking care of children. After my sister got sick I had to take care of my niece when she was one year old, by that time. Then I continued to help my sisters with their sons.

After that I met a guy and for one year got to know him better. After that we decided to get married. But before that, we left to go to New Jersey to earn the money to build a house. Then we started to live together, and I got pregnant, and he left again to work in New Jersey so we could buy things for the baby and pay for the furniture. Six months later he came back and two months after that I gave birth to a baby girl. During that time everything was fine. My husband found a job and I started working as a baby-sitter for my neighbor, in my house.

When my first daughter was nine months old, I got pregnant again. I had problems, so I went to the hospital, but I never knew I was going to have twins. I got really sick. I had lots of problems with the salt I had to use while I was pregnant. Because of that I lost one of my daughters. After that I gradually got over the shock and went home with my small child. She only weighed two-and-a-half pounds. She did not respond to the treatment the doctors were giving her, so

I had to take her back to the hospital, and she had to stay there for a couple of months. I was with her all the time. Now she is twelve years old and she is a really good daughter.

My two daughters are my treasure. In 1985 I came to Hartford, looking for a better place for my daughters to learn. After they started to go to school, I started to try to learn English, but every time I did, for some reason, I had to stop. Then I started to work in a factory. I worked there for a year. Then I was laid off.

After a time a neighbor told me about the different programs that Literacy Volunteers offered and I started to study English again. I surprised myself when I found out how much I had learned, and although there's a lot I don't understand, I know that I will make it. Our tutor is really patient, and the rest of the students are very nice people. I got interested in learning.

My intention is to find a job and to help my daughters with all they need so they will learn and have a nice future.

Bonifacia Reyes
Clark Family Resource Center

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
farmer	farm-er (2 syllables)	
electricity	e-lec-tric-i-ty (5 syllables)	
available	a-vail-a-ble (4 syllables)	

migrated	mi-gra-ted (3 syllables)	
pregnant	preg-nant (2 syllables)	
bigger	(big-ger) 2 syllables	
situation	sit-u-a-tion (4 syllables)	
together	to-geth-er (3 syllables)	
continue	con-tin-ue (3 syllables)	
received	re-ceived (2 syllables)	
earn	earn (one syllable)	
furniture	furn-i-ture (3 syllables)	
gradually	grad-u-a-lly (4 syllables)	
neighbor	neigh-bor (2 syllables)	
intention	in-ten-tion (3 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

In 1952 when I was born in San Lorenzo, Puerto Rico, my _____ lived on a small farm where they had an old wooden _____. My father was a _____ and my mother took care of my older brother and me, and helped my father in the farm.

During that time we did not have electricity _____ because that service was not available in the country. We got water from the river and we also _____ our clothes there. We lived like that for many years until my father _____ to the United States to work in the fields. He came home at the end of every year with _____ and every time before he left, he got my mother pregnant.

At last, my father was able to buy a better _____ and a bigger farm and we started living in better _____. He did not go back to the United States and started working his own farm. Little by little he bought animals and our situation got _____.

My aunts and uncles lived near by, and together with my parents, worked to have better _____ on the farm.

Then my brother and I started going to school. My older brother could not _____ his studies because he had some _____ with his eyes and other illnesses. During that time, we never went to see the doctors and our parents took care of us with _____ made out of different plants.

I _____ when my father used to sit with me in a hammock during the afternoon and he would teach me how to write my name and the numbers, one through ten, and how to read. That is why when I went to school for the first time, they skipped me to the second _____. During that time there was no kindergarten. So I

started at the second grade and _____ school until the third grade. Because my parents needed to send my two sisters to school, I had to stay in the house and _____ them with the chores.

My parents received letters from the school asking them to send me back, but with the poor _____ at my house, I could not go back. My parents did not have _____ money to send all of us to school. Time passed that way and we became ten brothers and sisters.

I was eleven when I went to live with nuns at a home for _____ people, but my mother got very sick with cancer and I had to go back home to take care of my brothers and sisters with the help of my father. The youngest was only two weeks old. I took care of them for nine _____.

During that time Social Services came to my house for my younger brothers and sisters. They took five of them away and I still haven't seen the three younger ones. When my brothers and sisters left, I went back with the nuns, and my father _____ with the other four.

Later on, I started regular classes in Hato Rey, Puerto Rico. For some months I studied half a day and worked at home until I completed seventh grade. Then I took a sewing course for three months. I took my brothers and sisters with me to the home and my father got _____ with another woman who had ten kids.

After some years my father and his _____ went to live in Chicago and we stayed in Puerto Rico. Since we did not have anywhere to go, we continued to work at the home because my father sold the farm, the house and everything that belonged to us.

After two of my sisters got married, I took the money I had saved, and went on a trip to Mexico for a month which was really _____ and that I will never forget!

When I came back I stayed with the nuns and I was there for a couple of more months. Then one of my sisters asked me to move in with her. After that I started to work with _____ families, taking care of children. After my sister got sick I had to take care of my niece when she was one year old, by that time. Then I _____ to help my sisters with their sons.

After that I met a guy and for one year got to know him better. After that we decided to get married. But before that, we left to go to New Jersey to _____ the money to build a house. Then we started to live together, and I got pregnant, and he left again to work in New Jersey so we could buy things for the baby and pay for the furniture. Six months later he came back and two months after that I gave birth to a baby girl. During that time everything was fine. My husband found a _____ and I started working as a baby-sitter for my neighbor, in my house.

When my first _____ was nine months old, I got pregnant again. I had problems, so I went to the hospital, but I never knew I was going to have twins. I got really _____. I had lots of _____ with the salt I had to use while I was pregnant. Because of that I lost one of my daughters. After that I gradually got over the _____ and went home with my small child. She only weighed two-and-a-half pounds. She did not respond to the _____ the doctors were giving her, so I had to take her back to the hospital, and she had to

stay there for a couple of months. I was with her all the time. Now she is twelve years old and she is a really good _____.

My two daughters are my treasure. In 1985 I came to Hartford, looking for a better place for my daughters to learn. After they started to go to school, I started to try to learn _____, but every time I did, for some reason, I had to stop. Then I started to _____ in a factory. I worked there for a year. Then I was laid off.

After a time a _____ told me about the different programs that Literacy Volunteers offered and I started to _____ English again. I surprised myself when I found out how much I had _____, and although there's a lot I don't understand, I know that I will make it. Our tutor is really _____, and the rest of the students are very _____ people. I got interested in learning.

My intention is to find a job and to help my _____ with all they need so they will learn and have a nice _____.

Questions

1. What role did Bonificia's father play in supporting his family?
2. In what ways did Bonificia's father support his children emotionally?
3. Why was Bonificia not allowed to attend school after the third grade?
4. What role did Bonificia play in the family?
5. Why do you think Bonificia's family was broken apart?
6. How did Bonificia's life change as she became an adult?
7. What hardships did she face and how did she deal with them?

8. What do you think is most important to Bonificia?
9. What does Bonificia's story make you think about in your own life?
10. Make a list of all the jobs Modesto had in Puerto Rico and the mainland U.S.

Lesson Eight

My name is Modesto Rivera. I come from Aguadilla, Puerto Rico. It is a very nice town.

When I was a child I worked on my father's farm. I grew beans, yams, tomatoes, green peppers and other vegetables. I liked helping my father at the farm, because I was happy working with him. I am happy when I remember my childhood.

When I was young I worked in construction in my town. That was a very hard job. I worked on houses and other constructions jobs. When I was fifteen years old I came to the United States, because I wanted to change my life.

I came in April 1965 to U.S. for first time. I was fifteen years old. I wanted to change my life. I didn't speak English, but I started to work with my brother in a hotel. I was a dishwasher. I went to Puerto Rico again, because I was worried about my family. In 1967 I went to Puerto Rico. I met a young lady named Elizabeth. She became my girlfriend and I was married to her for four and a half years. We had three children. Their names are Modesto Jr., Maribeth and Wilfredo. We got divorced in October 1972.

In 1973 I started to study Commercial Administration at the Interamerican University in Aguadilla, Puerto Rico, but I left after one semester because I didn't have a job and I needed work to get money for my children. I came back to U.S. the same year to work again. I came to Hartford, Connecticut and found a job with the same hotel I worked for before.

I met Carmen in 1986 when I studied English in Hartford High School. She's very nice, but she is sick. She has a heart problem and

she has diabetes. She needs a medical assistant. She goes to the hospital every month.

Now I study English with Literacy Volunteers. I feel good in the class because I learn a lot with my teacher Pam and the other students.

I am going to Puerto Rico to see my mother for Mother's Day. I shall come back here in June. I hope to take the G.E.D. in English and to look for a job.

Modesto Rivera
Clark Family Resource Center

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
construction	con-struc-tion (3 syllables)	
fifteen	fif-teen (2 syllables)	
diabetes	di-a-be-tes (4 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

My name is Modesto Rivera. I come from Aguadilla, Puerto Rico. It is a very _____ town.

When I was a child I worked on my _____ farm. I grew beans, yams, tomatoes, green peppers and other _____. I liked helping my father at the farm, because I was happy _____ with him. I am happy when I remember my childhood.

When I was young I worked in _____ in my town. That was a very _____ job. I worked on houses and other construction jobs. When I was fifteen years old I came to the United States, because I wanted to _____ my life.

I came in April 1965 to U.S. for first _____. I was fifteen years old. I wanted to change my _____. I didn't speak English, but I started to _____ with my brother in a hotel. I was a dishwasher. I went to Puerto Rico again, because I was worried about my _____. In 1967 I went to Puerto Rico. I met a young lady named Elizabeth. She became my _____ and I was married to her for four and a half years. We had three children. Their names are Modesto Jr., Maribeth and Wilfredo. We got _____ in October 1972.

In 1973 I started to study Commercial Administration at the Interamerican University in Aguadilla, Puerto Rico, but I left after one _____ because I didn't have a job and I needed work to get money for my children. I came back to U.S. the same _____ to work again. I came to Hartford, Connecticut and found a job with the same hotel I worked for before.

I met Carmen in 1986 when I studied English in Hartford High School. She's very nice, but she is _____. She has a heart problem and she has _____. She needs a medical assistant. She goes to the _____ every month.

Now I study English with Literacy Volunteers. I feel good in the class because I learn a lot with my teacher Pam and the other students.

I am going to Puerto Rico to see my mother for Mother's Day. I shall _____ back here in June. I _____ to take the G.E.D. in English and to look for a job.

Questions

1. In what ways do you think Modesto changed his life by coming to the U.S.?
2. In what ways have you changed your life by coming to the U.S.
3. In what ways is Modesto's story different from Teresa's, Zoraida's, and Bonificia's?
4. What might this say about male/female relationships in Puerto Rico and among Puerto Ricans as they migrate to the U.S. mainland?

Lesson Nine

A True Story

A story of a past life aimed toward the world championship of 1989

(Translated by Judy Reed)

This story originally appeared in **Our History: Remembering Puerto Rico**, edited by Judy Reed. It has been slightly revised for this volume.

This is about my past as a fighter who will never forget the boxing world. I, Elvin R. Clemente, have been a boxer since 1978. Boxing attracted me, so I began to practice it. One of my best supporters was my older brother Angel. It was a difficult beginning for me. I wasn't able to count on family support or on collecting the resources needed for a career in boxing. This was the beginning of a long uphill trek. Why uphill? Because it wasn't easy to be an athlete without economic means.

I began my task with much sacrifice. But I didn't give up. Without a boxing crown I had to prepare as if I were already a champion. By the year 1983 I was practicing the hard sport of boxing with other good boxers. When I felt sure of obtaining my first medal I had my first bout. It was in 1985 in a town competition in the marathon at Chermorque. The fact that it was my first bout made a strong impression on me. I never had an experience like that before.

My first fight was against a guy who was backed by a well-known promoter. He was very famous and his boys held many boxing championships. I suffered from that first bout, losing by a knockout in my first defeat. But I was not defeated mentally. Later, when my

road was uphill I prepared harder. I liked to prepare in an intense way.

The next year I began to have hope when I became more sure of myself. When I knew I could survive a real ordeal, I could smell a championship. The year 1987 was when I won my first medal and trophy as an athlete. Then I was approached by some gamblers, but I disliked them so much that when my previous opponent's trainer offered to train me, I didn't want him to because he wanted to steal the fight from me. These are things that don't have to happen in sports.

For the reader of this history and the interested public, I want to say that I never had a trainer or a handler in my corner to send me out to fight. I went out alone to confront my influential boxing opponents.

When I was in Levittown, Puerto Rico I had a handler. That was when my career as a boxer opened up. My objective was to reach the world championships in 1989. It was a long road. That was when I met good athletes like the champion of the light weight division, Chapo Rosario. He had brought much glory to Puerto Rico. I practiced with all the guys - they were all good, amateur and professional. All were favorites in different divisions of boxing.

In 1989 the hour came when I had to represent my backer. I did it with much pride. The hour of truth came when I went to fight in the regional eliminations in Puerto Rico in the North Region. I became champion of the North in the 156 pound class. By the year 1990 there would be victories and some things not to my taste in my boxing life. But I didn't give up. My objective was to go on to the world championships in 1989. That was when I fought for the first time on

HBO TV, transmitted to the USA. My fight was against a national champion, a veteran of many fights when I fought him for the first time.

Words	Syllables	Write Sentence
beginning	be-gin-ning (3 syllables)	
difficult	dif-fi-cult (3 syllables)	
uphill	up-hill (2 syllables)	
athlete	ath-lete (2 syllables)	
competition	com-pe-ti-ion (4 syllables)	
championships	champ-i-on-ships (4 syllables)	
intense	in-tense (2 syllables)	
approached	ap-proa-ched (3 syllables)	
gambler	gam-bler (2 syllables)	
regional	re-gi-o-nal (3 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

This is about my past as a _____ who will never forget the boxing world. I, Elvin R. Clemente, have been a _____ since 1978. Boxing attracted me, so I began to _____ it. One of my best _____ was my older brother Angel. It was a difficult beginning for me. I wasn't able to count on family _____ or on collecting the resources needed for a career in boxing. This was the _____ of a long uphill trek. Why uphill? Because it wasn't easy to be an athlete without economic means.

I began my task with much sacrifice. But I didn't give up. Without a boxing crown I had to prepare as if I were already a _____. By the year 1983 I was practicing the hard sport of boxing with other _____ boxers. When I felt sure of obtaining my first medal I had my first bout. It was in 1985 in a town _____ in the marathon at Chermorque. The fact that it was my first bout made a strong impression on _____. I never had an _____ like that before.

My first fight was against a guy who was backed by a well-known promoter. He was very _____ and his boys held many boxing championships. I suffered from that first bout, losing by a knockout in my first _____. But I was not defeated _____. Later, when my road was uphill I prepared harder. I liked to prepare in an _____ way.

The next year I began to have hope when I became more sure of _____. When I knew I could survive a real ordeal, I could smell a championship. The year 1987 was when I won my first medal and trophy as an athlete. Then I was _____ by some gamblers, but I _____ them so much that when my previous opponent's

trainer offered to train me, I didn't want him to because he wanted to _____ the fight from me. These are things that don't have to _____ in sports.

For the reader of this history and the interested public, I want to say that I never had a _____ or a handler in my corner to send me out to fight. I went out alone to confront my influential boxing _____.

When I was in Levittown, Puerto Rico I had a handler. That was when my career as a boxer _____ up. My _____ was to reach the world championships in 1989. It was a long _____. That was when I met good athletes like the champion of the light weight division, Chapo Rosario. He had brought much glory to Puerto Rico. I _____ with all the guys - they were all good, amateur and professional. All were favorites in different divisions of boxing.

In 1989 the hour came when I had to represent my backer. I did it with much pride. The hour of truth came when I went to fight in the _____ eliminations in Puerto Rico in the North Region. I became _____ of the North in the 156 pound class. By the year 1990 there would be _____ and some things not to my taste in my boxing life. But I didn't give up. My objective was to go on to the world championships in 1989. That was when I fought for the first time on HBO TV, transmitted to the USA. My fight was against a _____ champion, a veteran of many fights when I fought him for the first time.

Questions

1. Why was a boxing career an uphill trek for Elvin?
2. How did Elvin prepare for his career?
3. What does he mean by saying, "I like to prepare in an intense way?"
4. What obstacles did he have to overcome during his career? How did he handle them?
5. What do you think boxing meant to Elvin?
6. If you were to write a letter to Elvin, what would you say?

Lesson Ten

The following stories come from residents of Shepherd Park on Sisson Avenue in Hartford who participate in an ESOL class led by Lori Bilosz and Michael Stahl.

Antonia Santiago

My name is Antonia Santiago. I was born in Utuado, Puerto Rico. I was born on March 14, 1918. I came to American in 1964, to Hartford, CT. When I came to the U.S. my nephew sent for me because I am a widow. My sister came to Hartford in 1974, but she died two years ago. I have two brothers and two sisters in Puerto Rico. I miss my family in Puerto Rico. My sister calls me every month.

I am Adelaide Ortiz. I was born in Puerto Rico. My birthday is October 15, 1924. I came to the United States on August 26, 1963 to have a better future for my children. I have one boy and two girls. As soon as I arrived in New York, I started to work in the Bronx. I moved to Manhattan and started to make watchbands.

My children attended school. One day my son told me the teacher wanted to see me. I went to school and the teacher gave me a letter for welfare. My son, Milton, needed clothes for a graduation from sixth grade. She did that because my son told her that I was a single mother and my salary was poor. I made \$38 a week. But because I worked so hard, I made \$80 a week on piecework. For those reasons this is the country that will never be forgotten.

Carmen Santiago's Story

I come from Puerto Rico, a beautiful small land with lovely generous people. I came here for a better future for myself and my family.

Indeed, I am very happy and proud of this great country. Sometimes I miss my Puerto Rico

I was born in Corozol in East Puerto Rico in 1929—Depression time. MY father and mother worked on the farm. I went to the eight grade. Then I stayed with my mother at home. I learned to sew with her. I just stayed at the house all the time doing housework. Then I found my boyfriend, George, and that was the end of that. Then we came to the U.S.A.

I didn't know English at that time. That was starting in 1950, not many people spoke Spanish in New York. So it was hard. My first daughter was born in 1950. I decided to learn English by reading the newspaper and watching TV. My oldest daughter went to school and started learning English. She started teaching me. Then I went to work in a factory. People were friendly. I found two ladies who spoke Spanish, but they spoke English, too. With them I learned to speak a little more of English. My youngest son was born in 1958. I stopped working at the factory and worked at home while my children grew up.

My husband passed away on 1979. I got sick and was tired. I took care of my grandchildren most of the time. I came to Shepherd Park last November.

Maria Gonzalez
October 23, 2000

I got married in 1954. I have seven children, four boys and three girls. The first is named Radame. We call him Nerry. My next son is Wilson. Next is Marie. She was born in 1952. Next is Wilburt. He was born in 1960. Next is Harry. He was born in 1963. Next is Olga. She was born in 1970. The other one is Naomi. She was born in 1971. We have ten grandchildren.

Nerry lives in East Hampton. His wife's name is Norma. They have two children. The two boys are in the navy. Nerry ploughs snow for the state. Wilson lives in Puerto Rico. He fixes street lights. Maria lives in Puerto Rico with her husband Epiphanio. They have one son. She cuts hair. Wilburt is sick. He has schizophrenia. He got sick when he was twelve. His hormones changed. He is in the hospital in Middletown. Every week I visit him. I bring him food he likes. Harry lives in Clemens Place in Hartford. His wife's name is Evelyn. They have three children. In Puerto Rico he was a plumber. He is studying to be a plumber here. Olga lives in Puerto Rico. She is divorced. She has two children. Now she doesn't work. She's raising her children. Naomi lives in Newington. Her husband's name is Richard. They got married two years ago. They have no children. She's working with computers at Aetna.

Coming to America

(Several members of the group said what made them happy and sad about coming to the U.S. mainland and leaving Puerto Rico)

Happy	Sad
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• My grandson sent for me to take care of his children.• I'm happy because all my children are in the U.S. They are all working.• Here my children learn English and work here, too• I'm happy because I have all my children and grandchildren here• We have many programs here.• We have good support for the elderly.• I am happy because the most important medication and medical care are given to me through medicaid.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I'm sad because I miss my family in Puerto Rico.• I'm sad because I left my homeland.• Sometimes I'm sad because I have one daughter in Puerto Rico. She doesn't like it here. She doesn't like winter.• My brother is in Puerto Rico. He hates the winter.• I'm sad when I remember my friends, my time with them, talking with them. I miss them. <p>I'm sad because many members of my family passed away in Puerto Rico. December 1st my sister dies three years ago. I have only one brother left in Puerto Rico. He's very sick. He had a stroke. Part of his brain was damaged. When he tries to talk to people he can't speak. He forgets what he wants to say.</p>

Fill in the Blanks
(Carmen Santiago's story)

I come from Puerto Rico, a beautiful small _____ with lovely generous _____. I came here for a better future for myself and my _____. Indeed, I am very happy and proud of this great country. Sometimes I miss my Puerto Rico

I was born in Corozol in East Puerto Rico in 1929—Depression time. MY father and mother worked on the _____. I went to the eight grade. Then I stayed with my mother at home. I learned to sew with her. I just stayed at the house all the time doing _____. Then I found my boyfriend, George, and that was the end of that. Then we came to the U.S.A.

I didn't know English at that time. That was starting in 1950, not many people spoke _____ in New York. So it was hard. My first daughter was born in 1950. I decided to learn English by reading the newspaper and _____ TV. My oldest daughter went to school and started learning English. She started _____ me. Then I went to work in a _____. People were friendly. I found two ladies who spoke Spanish, but they spoke English, too. With them I learned to speak a little more of _____. My youngest son was born in 1958. I stopped working at the _____ and worked at home while my children grew up.

My husband passed away on 1979. I got _____ and was tired. I took care of my _____ most of the time. I came to Shepherd Park last November.

Word	Syllable	Write Sentence
nephew	neph-ew (2 syllables)	
clothes	clothes (one syllables)	
piecework	piece-work (2 syllables)	
forgotten	for-got-ten (2 syllables)	
generous	gen-er-ous (3 syllables)	
housework	housework (2 syllables)	
boyfriend	boy-friend (2 syllables)	
friendly	friend-ly (2 syllables)	
grandchildren	grand-chil-dren (3 syllables)	

Questions

1. What was life like for you in your native country?
2. Why did you come to the United States?
3. What was life like for you when you came to the United States?
4. What do you miss most about your homeland?
5. Do you stay in touch with people from your country? How?
6. What makes you happy and sad about coming to the U.S. Mainland and leaving your country?

Happy

Sad

Voices From Latin and South America
George Demetrion (Editor)
Manager of Community-Based Programming
Literacy Volunteers of Greater Hartford

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Lesson One

Lesson Two

Lesson Three

Lesson Four

Lesson Five

Lesson Six

Lesson Seven

Lesson Eight

Lesson Nine

Lesson Ten

Voices From Latin and South America
George Demetrion (Editor)
Manager of Community-Based Programming
Literacy Volunteers of Greater Hartford

Lesson One

My name is Naysting Ortiz. I was born on September 27, 1969. I am twenty-four years old. I am a student of civil engineering. I have finished my studies.

I have a beautiful family. We are three sisters and I am the oldest of all of them. We are from Venezuela. We lived on Puerto La Cruz. There are many beaches in this city and we enjoyed all of them all the time.

I have always dreamed of speaking English. I am in the Estados Unidos, U.S.A., but it was not easy to come to this country because I had a job in Puerto La Cruz. I was an installation sanitary supervisor and worked for a busy hotel. This hotel was in front of the beach.

My country had many economic problems because of the Latino Bank. All of the construction stopped and I lost my job.

At that moment, I was finishing my last semester of engineering. Then I thought it was the moment for me to go to the United States and I decided to take the risk and do it.

Naysting Ortiz
Arbor Street Reading Center

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
finished	fin-ish-ed (2 syllables)	
beautiful	beau-ti-ful (3 syllables)	
beaches	bea-ches (2 syllables)	
sanitary	san-i-tar-y (4 syllables)	
supervisor	su-per-vi-sor (4 syllables)	
construction	con-struc-tion (3 syllables)	
decided	de-ci-ded (3 syllables)	

Unscramble Sentences

1. We oldest of are three am the all of sisters them and I

2. job all and I of the stopped construction lost my

Fill in the Blanks

My _____ is Naysting Ortiz. I was born on September 27, 1969. I am twenty-four years old. I am a _____ of civil engineering. I have _____ my studies.

I have a beautiful _____. We are three sisters and I am the _____ of all of them. We are _____ Venezuela. We lived on Puerto La Cruz. There are many beaches in this city and we _____ all of them all the time.

I have always dreamed of _____ English. I am in the Estados Unidos, U.S.A., but it was not easy to come to this _____ because I had a job in Puerto La Cruz. I was an installation sanitary supervisor and _____ for a busy hotel. This hotel was in front of the beach.

My country had many economic _____ because of the Latino Bank. All of the construction stopped and I lost my _____.

At that moment, I was finishing my last semester of engineering. Then I thought it was the moment for me to _____ to the United States and I decided to take the _____ and do it.

Questions

1. Where did Naysting live before moving to the U.S? How does she describe the city where she lived?
2. How would you describe the country and the area where you lived before you came to the U.S.?
3. What did Naysting do for work in her country? What happened?
4. What did you do for your work in your country?
5. Why do you think Naysting decided to go to the U.S.? What did she risk?
6. Why did you decide to go the U.S.? What did you risk?
7. How has your life changed since coming to the United States?
8. What has remained the same for you?

Lesson Two

I will try to write about my experiences in the U.S.A. When I came from Venezuela, I arrived in Miami. I spoke only a few words of English and had to use my dictionary a lot.

In Miami, I saw a lot of older people. I never saw so many old people before and so many different churches.

After one month in Miami, I came to Hartford. Here I started to study English and explored the city and looked for new friends.

I had positive and negative experiences, I try to remember the good things and forget the bad. I think the bad experiences helped me grow in my personal life and gave me more strength.

I lived in Venezuela for nearly twelve years. I traveled to Ecuador and Columbia. I learned about each country and found that they are both different.

Peru is my native country. I love my country. Thank God for being born in Peru. I was born in Lima. Lima is the capital and we have four seasons but we don't have snow in the winter or zero degree temperatures. We have two languages in Peru, Spanish and Quechua with thirty different dialects.

The most famous place in Peru is Cuzco. It is the imperial capital of the Incas. A lot of tourists come to visit, but we have other beautiful places too. We have traditional cities, beaches, and forests and the Amazon basin. Different cities have colorful costumes and special and delicious foods.

Venezuela, is so beautiful! There are beaches, mountains, and all year it is like spring. The skies are blue and tropical. The people are friendly and outgoing.

But I like this country too. I am learning a new language and meeting new friends here. It's a positive experience and I think this is a great country where children can have a good future.

Eudocia Panteleon

Arbor Street Reading Center

Word	Syllable	Write Sentence
experience	ex-per-i-ence (4 syllables)	
arrived	ar-rived (2 syllables)	
explored	ex-plored (2 syllables)	
personal	per-so-nal (3 syllables)	
native	na-tive (2 syllables)	
dialects	di-a-lects (3 syllables)	
tourists	tour-ists (2 syllables)	
costumes	cos-tumes (2 syllables)	
delicious	de-li-cious (3 syllables)	

Unscramble Sentences

1. I dictionary spoke a few and had only my a lot words English to use

2. new I am meeting new a language and friends here learning

_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
_____ _____ _____ _____

Fill in the Blanks

I will try to write about my _____ in the U.S.A. When I came from Venezuela, I arrived in Miami. I spoke only a few words of English and had to use my _____ a lot.

In Miami, I saw a lot of older _____. I never saw so many old people before and so many _____ churches.

After one month in Miami, I came to Hartford. Here I started to study _____ and explored the city and looked for new friends.

I had positive and _____ experiences, I try to remember the good things and forget the bad. I think the bad experiences helped me grow in my personal life and gave me more _____.

I lived in Venezuela for nearly twelve years. I _____ to Ecuador and Columbia. I learned about each _____ and found that they are both different.

Peru is my native country. I love my _____. Thank God for being born in Peru. I was born in Lima. Lima is the capital and we have four seasons but we don't have _____ in the winter or zero degree temperatures. We have two languages in Peru, Spanish and Quechua with thirty different dialects.

The most famous place in Peru is Cuzco. It is the imperial capital of the Incas. A lot of tourists come to _____, but we have other beautiful places too. We have traditional cities, beaches, and forests and the Amazon basin. Different cities have colorful _____ and special and delicious foods.

Venezuela, is so beautiful! There are beaches, mountains, and all year it is like _____. The skies are blue and tropical. The people are _____ and outgoing.

But I like this country too. I am learning a new _____ and meeting new friends here. It's a positive _____ and I think this is a great country where _____ can have a good future.

Questions

1. What country did Eudocia come from?
2. How did she describe her country?
3. How would you describe your native country?
4. When Eudocia came to the U.S. where did she first go? How long did she stay? Where did she go next?
5. When you first came to the U.S, where did you first go? How long did you stay there? Where did you go next?
6. How long have you lived in Hartford? What do you like and don't like about Hartford?
7. How would you compare Hartford with other places you lived?

Possible things to think about?

- weather
- buildings
- meeting new people
- size
- opportunities for work and education
- transportation
- government services
- recreation
- other

Lesson Three

I have been in Hartford, CT for four years. I came from Caracas, Venezuela. Caracas is the capital of Venezuela, South America. I was born in Lima, Peru.

Before I came here, my ideas about the U.S.A. were different than they are now. When I visited at Trinity College, I felt so special. I felt I was in the last century. The construction was in the old style and beautiful.

In Caracas, there are more buildings than houses because space is limited. They don't have space for house construction. In Lima, we have more houses than apartments and they are constructed from brick and not of wood. The houses are of different types and not too old. Many houses in Connecticut have a lot of antique furniture. In Lima most houses are less expensive and the furniture is modern.

Many Spanish speaking people live in Hartford. Americans have the wrong idea that all of us are from the same country because we speak Spanish. That is not true. We come from different countries in South America, Central America, North America (Mexico), the Caribbean and Spain. We speak Spanish, but we talk with different accents and use special words. Many times we don't understand each other's Spanish dialects.

I feel impressed when I go to the library. There is a lot of material for continuing education and all of it is free. I think education is most important for the future of all countries.

I learn new things about the U.S.A. And I say thank God for this time in my life, for the new friends and for everything.

Eudocia Panaleon
Arbor Street Reading Center

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
special	spe-cial (2 syllables)	
construction	con-struc-tion (3 syllables)	
beautiful	beau-ti-ful (3 syllables)	
furniture	fur-ni-ture (3 syllables)	
accent	ac-cent (2 syllables)	
dialect	di-a-lect (3 syllables)	
everything	Ev-er-y-thing (4 syllables)	

Unscramble Sentences

1. the U.S.A. were came here, my ideas about different than they are now before I

2. important future for I think is most important for the of all education countries

Fill in the Blanks

I have been in Hartford, CT for four _____. I came from Caracas, Venezuela. Caracas is the _____ of Venezuela, South America. I was born in Lima, Peru.

Before I came here, my ideas about the U.S.A. were _____ than they are now. When I visited at Trinity College, I felt so special. I felt I was in the last century. The construction was in the old style and _____.

In Caracas, there are more buildings than houses because space is _____. They don't have space for house construction. In Lima, we have more _____ than apartments and they are constructed from brick and not of wood. The houses are of different types and not too old. Many houses in Connecticut have a lot of antique _____. In Lima most houses are less _____ and the furniture is modern.

Many Spanish _____ people live in Hartford. Americans have the _____ idea that all of us are from the same country because we speak Spanish. That is not true. We come from _____ countries in South America, Central America, North America (Mexico), the Caribbean and Spain. We speak Spanish, but we talk with _____ accents and use special words. Many times we don't understand each other's Spanish _____.

I feel impressed when I go to the library. There is a lot of material for continuing _____ and all of it is free. I think education is most important for the _____ of all countries.

I learn new things about the U.S.A. And I say thank God for this time in my life, for the new _____ and for everything.

Questions

1. What ideas did you have about the United States before you came here?
2. What ideas do you have about the United States now?
3. Why did they change?
4. Where do people live in your country? Describe their living quarters.
5. Why do many people think that all Spanish speaking people from Latin and the same America are the same? What does this say about the way some people think
6. What are some ways that you can develop your education inexpensively or for free?
7. How important is education for you? Please explain.
8. How important is education for your children or your family members? Please explain.

The following three essays were written by Klever Garcia. Klever studied English at the Reading Center for several years in the late 1980s and early 1990s. He worked with Betty Ross and George Demetrian. Klever has been editing a regional Hispanic magazine **Panorama** since the mid-1990s.

Lesson Four

Peruvian Politics

Peru has a centralized power structure concentrated in Lima. The centralization of power provokes many conflicts. A few rich families have all the power. There are deep inequalities between the wealthy and the poor. There is a middle class in Peru, but it lacks power.

Throughout Peru, farmland is being deserted because more and more people prefer to live in the city. Yet, in the cities there are not many opportunities. The poor, therefore, become even poorer. One consequence of this is the disappointment Peruvians feel about their lives. People live without hope and survive day by day with no goals for the future.

A consequence of this is that the people don't believe in the politicians. Because of the severe inequalities in Peruvian society, there is a strong guerrilla movement in the country. This makes political conditions tense. For example, although President Fujimori was elected in a democratic manner, in order to maintain his power, he had to rely on the army and now is acting as a dictator.

Klever Garcia
Arbor Street Reading Center

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
concentrate	con-cen-trate (3 syllables)	
provoke	pro-voke (2 syllables)	
inequality	in-e-qual-i-ty (5 syllables)	
power	po-wer (2 syllables)	
prefer	pre-fer (2 syllables)	
survive	sur-vive (2 syllables)	
democratic	dem-o-cra-tic (4 syllables)	
maintain	main-tain (2 syllables)	
dictator	dic-ta-tor (3 syllables)	

Unscramble Sentences

1. concentrated structure has a centralized power Peru in Lima

2. hope and survive people live future without day by day with no goals
for the

Fill in the Blanks

Peru has a centralized _____ structure concentrated in Lima. The centralization of power _____ many conflicts. A few rich _____ have all the power. There are deep _____ between the wealthy and the poor. There is a middle class in Peru, but it _____ power.

Throughout Peru, farmland is being deserted because more and more people _____ to live in the city. Yet, in the cities there are not many _____. The poor, therefore, become even _____. One consequence of this is the _____ Peruvians feel about their lives. People live without hope and survive day by day with no _____ for the future.

A consequence of this is that the people don't believe in the _____. Because of the severe _____ in Peruvian society, there is a strong guerrilla movement in the country. This makes political conditions tense. For example, although President Fujimori was elected in a democratic manner, in order to maintain his power, he had to rely on the army and now is acting as a _____.

Questions

1. How does Klever describe political conditions in Peru?
2. In what ways are the politics of Peru similar and different than the politics in your native country?
3. What do you like and dislike about political conditions in your native country?
4. What do you like and dislike about political conditions in the United States?
5. In what ways do politics affect people on a personal basis?
6. What would you like to say to the political leaders of your native country?
7. What would you like to say to the political leaders of the U.S.?

Lesson Five

Voices and Opinions

There is much interest when people talk about minority groups and their role in the North American society. On this occasion we will examine the Hispanic and African-American populations.

Recently we were reading the Census Bureau's report and its demographic prognosis for the year 2080. It says by that year the combined Hispanic and African-American population will represent thirty-five percent of the U.S. and the white population will be in the minority.

With this data we began to talk to various people to find out their opinions about that prognosis and the political, social, and economic consequences of such changes.

We spoke with professionals, politicians, and non-professionals of the three groups. There were some people who did not want to think about the remote future of 2080. Others were conservative and predicted that the Hispanic and African-American population would continue to occupy the lowest levels of society and the white population will go on controlling the political and economic structures of society. However, others thought that the political power of the Hispanic and African-American communities would continue to grow. In many cities governments would be led by the Hispanic and/or African-American communities.

By 2080 this country probably would be more divided and the social conflicts and discrimination would prevent too many people from achieving the "American Dream" that is not only material well-being, but is also cultural assimilation and integration into this country.

Klever Garcia
Arbor Street Reading Center

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
minority	mi-nor-i-ty (4 syllables)	
represent	rep-re-sent (3 syllables)	
various	var-i-ous (3 syllables)	
opinions	o-pin-ions (3 syllables)	
prognosis	prog-no-sis (3 syllables)	
consequences	con-se-quen-ces (4 syllables)	
professional	pro-fes-si-o-nal (5 syllables)	
conservative	con-ser-va-tive (4 syllables)	
assimilation	a-sim-mi-la-tion (5 syllables)	
integration	in-te-gra-tion (4 syllables)	

Unscramble Sentences

1. North American there is much interest when minority groups and their role in the society people talk about

2. political, social, and economic with this data we began to find out their opinions about that prognosis and the consequences talk to various people of such changes to

Fill in the Blanks

There is much interest when people talk about _____ groups and their role in the North American society. On this occasion we will examine the Hispanic and African-American populations.

Recently we were reading the Census Bureau's report and its _____ prognosis for the year 2080. It says by that year the combined Hispanic and African-American population will represent thirty-five percent of the U.S. and the white population will be in the _____.

With this data we began to talk to various people to find out their _____ about that prognosis and the political, social, and economic consequences of such changes.

We spoke with professionals, politicians, and non-professionals of the three groups. There were some _____ who did not want to think about the remote future of 2080. Others were conservative and predicted that the Hispanic and African-American population would continue to _____ the lowest levels of society and the white population will go on controlling the political and economic structures of society. However, others thought that the political power of the Hispanic and African-American communities would continue to _____. In many cities governments would be led by the Hispanic and/or African-American communities.

By 2080 this country probably would be more _____ and the social conflicts and discrimination would prevent too many people from achieving the "American Dream" that is not only material well-being, but is also cultural assimilation and integration into this country.

Questions

1. How would you define a minority group?
2. What are the most important issues that minority groups face today?
3. How do you think relationships between the dominant Caucasian community and ethnic and racial minorities will change in the next decade?
4. What, in your opinion, needs to change?
5. What are the challenges that groups from different backgrounds face in attempting to live together in society?
6. How would you define the "American Dream?" What about it seems real to you? What about it does not seem real?

Lesson Six

I was born in Piura, Peru. Peru is divided into twenty-one departments and Piura is the capital of one of the departments. Piura is a big city and the third most important city in Peru.

I grew up in Chiclayo which is an important city for trade with Ecuador. When I was fifteen, I moved to Lima. In Chiclayo I lived with my grandparents. It was a beautiful experience for me. I was very happy in Chiclayo.

After I moved, I missed my aunts, uncles and cousins. I liked Lima, however, because I made many friends, including girls, and had many opportunities for new adventures. I lived in Lima for about twenty years. I went to the University of Lima and majored in psychology. After I graduated, I worked in communications, in a variety of capacities, journalism, radio and advertising. I left Lima for the United States in 1987.

Klever Garcia
Arbor Street Reading Center

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
important	im-por-tant (3 syllables)	
beautiful	beau-ti-ful (3 syllables)	
advertising	ad-ver-ti-sing (4 syllables)	
psychology	psy-chol-o-gy (4 syllables)	
experience	ex-per-i-ence (4 syllables)	

Unscramble Sentences

1. third city most important Piura is a big city and the in Peru

2. which is I grew up in Chiclayo an for trade with Ecuador important city

Fill in the Blanks

I was born in Piura, Peru. Peru is _____ into twenty-one departments and Piura is the capital of one of the departments. Piura is a big city and the third most _____ city in Peru.

I grew up in Chiclayo which is an important city for trade with Ecuador. When I was fifteen, I _____ to Lima. In Chiclayo I lived with my grandparents. It was a beautiful _____ for me. I was very happy in Chiclayo.

After I moved, I missed my aunts, uncles and cousins. I liked Lima, however, _____ I made many friends, including girls, and had many opportunities for new adventures. I lived in Lima for about twenty years. I went to the University of Lima and _____ in psychology. After I graduated, I worked in communications, in a variety of capacities; journalism, radio and advertising. I _____ Lima for the United States in 1987.

Questions

1. What do you think Klever experienced when he moved to Chiclayo to Lima in Peru?
2. Have you ever moved to a big city? What was it like for you?
3. List at least three advantages and disadvantages of living in a big city?
4. Do you prefer to live in a city, town, or village? Please explain.
5. How important do you think education was for Klever?
6. Why do you think Klever moved to the United States?
7. Of the three essays Klever wrote, which one did you like the best? Why?

Lesson Seven

I am an immigrant from South America. My country has three regions: the coast, the mountainous sierra and the jungle (the selva Amazonia).

Peru is famous for its ruins of Machu Piccho in the state of Cuzco. This state is the archiological capital of the world.

Peru has twenty-three states. I was born in Cajabama. It's a little town in the state of Cajamarca. This is in the North Sierra. I lived with my parents and my brothers.

I lived in my town until I was nineteen years old. After that I moved to the capital, Lima. In this city I worked and lived.

My country has different places that are beautiful because they have famous customs. For example, in Cuzco we celebrate the remembrance of inti Raimi. In Jacucho they celebrate the "Week of the Saint" and in Ica the "Festival of the Wine." Lima celebrates the "Procession of Senor de los Milagros" and in Trujillo the "Capital of Spring." This town has the parade. The flowers are beautiful. Cajamarca is the capital of carnival festivities in Peru. It seems like Rio de Janeiro. Over there, everybody has a very good time.

Flor

Arbor Street Reading Center

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
immigrant	im-mi-grant (3 syllables)	
region	re-gion (2 syllables)	
famous	fam-ous (2 syllables)	
ruins	ru-ins (2 syllables)	
celebrate	cel-e-brate (3 syllables)	
carnival	car-ni-val (3 syllables)	

Unscramble Sentences

1. nineteen years old I town until I lived in my was

2. different beautiful my country has because they have famous places that are customs

Fill in the Blanks

I am an _____ from South America. My country has three _____: the coast, the mountainous sierra and the jungle (the selva Amazonia).

Peru is famous for its ruins of Machu Piccho in the state of Cuzco. This state is the archiological capital of the world.

Peru has twenty-three states. I was born in Cajabama. It's a little town in the state of Cajamarca. This is in the North Sierra. I lived with my _____ and my brothers.

I lived in my _____ until I was nineteen years old. After that I moved to the _____, Lima. In this city I worked and lived.

My country has _____ places that are beautiful because they have famous customs. For example, in Cuzco we celebrate the remembrance of inti Raimi. In Jacucho they celebrate the "Week of the Saint" and in Ica the "Festival of the Wine." Lima celebrates the "Procession of Senor de los Milagros" and in Trujillo the "Capital of Spring." This town has the parade. The flowers are _____. Cajamarca is the capital of carnival festivities in Peru. It seems like Rio de Janeiro. Over there, _____ has a very good time.

Questions

1. How would you describe the geography of your native country?
2. What are some famous places in your native country? Please describe them.
3. What image comes to your mind when you read Flor's description of Peru.
4. Could you think of something to describe that contains beautiful images?

Lesson Eight

My country is Peru. I worked at People's Bank of Peru. I labored there for thirty-seven years. I had beautiful experiences and great friends. Peru is a wonderful country with beautiful places, pretty beaches and historic ruins. Her people are very friendly. I lived the last ten years in the capital, Lima in the Pueblo Libre district.

I have five children, four daughters and one son. Three are married and they have given me seven grandchildren. Five live in Lima and two in Odessa City.

During the time that I worked in the agency I had to travel to the interior of my country. In the rainy season it was very difficult to travel because the road was closed for a big mud slide and the cars and buses couldn't arrive at their destination and I had to walk a great distance. I arrived completely dirty and wet, but this setback wasn't a problem.

In April of 1993, the government of the U.S.A. conferred a resident visa on my wife and I. We were to travel to U.S.A. on July 2nd. On July 3rd we arrived in Hartford. We dedicated the first two weeks to learning about Hartford and other towns. We had the luck to travel to Baltimore, Washington D.C. and Boston. After our vacations my wife found a job in the Joanna factory, where she worked from July to December first. The factory had problems and she found a new job in Farmington at the Hair Club for Men, where she is working at the moment. After two weeks, she got me a space to work with her.

Abel Bedoya
Arbor Street Reading Center

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
wonderful	won-der-ful (3 syllables)	
beautiful	beau-ti-ful (3 syllables)	
agency	a-gen-cy (3 syllables)	
difficult	dif-fi-cult (3 syllables)	
distance	dis-tance (2 syllables)	
government	gov-ern-ment (3 syllables)	

Unscramble Sentences

1. historic ruins wonderful country with beautiful places, Peru is a pretty beaches and

2. my country during the time in the agency I had to travel to the interior of that I worked

Fill in the Blanks

My _____ is Peru. I worked at People's Bank of Peru. I _____ there for thirty-seven years. I had beautiful experiences and great _____. Peru is a wonderful country with beautiful places, pretty beaches and historic ruins. Her people are very _____. I lived the last ten years in the capital, Lima in the Pueblo Libre district.

I have five children, four _____ and one son. Three are married and they have given me seven _____. Five live in Lima and two in Odessa City.

During the time that I _____ in the agency I had to travel to the interior of my country. In the rainy season it was very difficult to _____ because the road was closed for a big mud slide and the cars and buses couldn't arrive at their destination and I had to walk a great distance. I arrived completely dirty and wet, but this setback wasn't a _____.

In April of 1993, the government of the U.S.A. conferred a resident visa on my wife and I. We were to travel to U.S.A. on July 2nd. On July 3rd we _____ in Hartford. We _____ the first two weeks to learning about Hartford and other towns. We had the luck to travel to Baltimore, Washington D.C. and Boston. After our vacations my wife found a job in the Joanna factory, where she worked from July to December first. The factory had problems and she found a new _____ in Farmington at the Hair Club for Men, where she is working at the moment. After two weeks, she got me a space to work with her.

Questions

1. What do you think Abel's life was like in Peru?
2. Why do you think he and his wife decided to move to the United States after living in Peru for so many years?
3. What do you think he and his wife sacrificed in leaving Peru?

4. In what ways do you think their lives were improved by coming to the United States?
5. What did you like most about Abel's story?
6. If you could write Abel a letter what would you like to say?

Lesson Nine

This essay was written jointly by Martin and his tutor, Dick Huntley. Martin expressed his ideas. Dick re-wrote some parts of it to help Martin with his English and Martin and Dick together agreed on the final version. We made a few additional changes.

Language and Culture in Lima Peru

The culture of Peru is primarily Spanish colonial. It has two distinct languages - the first is Spanish which is basic in the developed areas throughout Peru. The other is Quechua which comes from the Incas. Most Quechua speakers learn to speak Spanish. Quechua is spoken by most people outside the Spanish cultural areas by the native or original people. It is a written language but there are few books and little literature in Quecha. In addition, many other separate dialects or languages are spoken in the tropical, equatorial regions toward the border with Brazil and Ecuador and around the Amazon in the region known as the Selva. These people are generally known as Los Indios.

In recent years the Chinese and Japanese language have been spoken in Peru, mostly in Lima, because of the growth of business with those two countries. I had many Chinese friends who were able to speak to me in Spanish.

There is very little English used in Peru except for tourists and in business. My English comes from what I learned in high school in Lima where I had classes for three years. But it was difficult because all the time I was speaking Spanish outside of class. It's a problem here, also. I have been here three months and I speak mostly Spanish with friends and family. I know I must speak more, so I come to LVGH.

Martin Fernandez and Dick Huntley
Arbor Street Reading Center

Word	Syllables	Write sentence
primarily	pri-mar-i-ly (4 syllables)	
colonial	co-lon-i-al (4 syllables)	
outside	out-side (2 syllables)	
original	or-i-gi-nal (4 syllables)	
language	lang-uage (2 syllables)	
separate	sep-arate (3 syllables)	
dialects	di-a-lects (3 syllables)	
border	bor-der (2 syllables)	
business	bus-i-ness (3 syllables)	
tourist	tour-ist (2 syllables)	

Unscramble Sentences

1. speak to friends who I Spanish had many were able to me in Chinese

2. there is little in Peru except for tourists and in business English used very

The _____ of Peru is primarily Spanish colonial. It has two distinct _____ - the first is Spanish which is basic in the developed areas throughout Peru. The other is Quechua which comes from the Incas. Most Quechua speakers learn to _____ Spanish. Quechua is spoken by most people outside the Spanish cultural areas by the _____ or original people. It is a written language but there are few _____ and little literature in Quechua. In addition, many other separate _____ or languages are spoken in the tropical, equatorial regions toward the border with Brazil and Ecuador and around the Amazon in the region known as the Selva. These people are generally known as Los Indios.

In recent years the Chinese and Japanese language have been _____ in Peru, mostly in Lima, because of the growth of business with those two countries. I had many Chinese _____ who were able to speak to me in Spanish.

There is very little English used in Peru _____ for tourists and in business. My English comes from what I _____ in high school in Lima where I had classes for three years. But it was difficult because all the time I was _____ Spanish outside of class. It's a _____ here, also. I have been here three months and I speak mostly Spanish with _____ and family. I know I must speak more, so I come to LVGH.

Questions

1. What does Martin mean when he says that the culture of Peru is primarily Spanish colonial?
2. What influence have other countries had on your original country?
3. In addition to the dominant language spoken in your country, what other languages are spoken? Why?
4. Why was it difficult for Martin to learn English? Where did he speak English?
5. What opportunities do you have to learn English outside of class?
6. Can you find additional opportunities to speak English? Where?

7. How important is it for you to continue speaking your native language.
8. What conflicts do you and members of your family experience in deciding what language to speak?
9. Do you want your children or grandchildren to speak your native language? Why or why not?

Lesson Ten

Celebrating Christmas in Columbia

In my country, Christmas is very important. The radio stations play Christmas music, and the stores are very busy. Many families have Christmas trees in their homes. Others have mangers. Children like the mangers and pray and sing to the Child Jesus for nine days, from the 16th of December to the 24th of December. They beg him for toys and we give presents to them in the name of the Child Jesus. There is no Santa Claus.

The night of December 24th the adults exchange presents too and the families are usually together and have a big dinner.

But the most important celebration of the year is December 31st. The whole family is together and they have a big party until midnight. Exactly twelve o'clock, the people embrace and wish one another Happy New Year. Some take a suitcase and run around the block where they live. Others put an egg in a glass of water to interpret their luck for the next year.

After midnight the people can have music, dancing, meals, and drinks. They can also go out to dance or visit other friends and relatives and celebrate until the next day.

Lenor Gonzalez
Arbor Street Reading Center

Word	Syllable	Write Sentence
Christmas	Christ-mas (2 syllables)	
manger	man-ger (2 syllables)	
toys	toys (one syllable)	
presents	pres-ents (2 syllables)	
exchange	ex-change (2 syllables)	
suitcase	suit-case (2 syllables)	
interpret	in-ter-pret (3 syllables)	
celebrate	cel-e-brate (3 syllables)	

Unscramble Sentences

1. country very in my important Christmas is

2. big party together and they is have a until midnight the whole family

Fill in the Blanks

In my _____, Christmas is very important. The radio _____ play Christmas music, and the stores are very busy. Many families have Christmas _____ in their homes. Others have mangers. Children like the mangers and pray and _____ to the Child Jesus for nine days, from the 16th of December to the 24th of December. They beg

him for toys and we give _____ to them in the name of the Child Jesus. There is _____ Santa Claus.

The night of December 24th the adults _____ presents too and the families are usually together and have a big dinner.

But the most important _____ of the year is December 31st. The whole family is _____ and they have a big party until midnight. Exactly twelve o'clock, the people embrace and _____ one another Happy New Year. Some take a _____ and run around the block where they live. Others put an egg in a glass of water to interpret their _____ for the next year.

After midnight the people can have _____, dancing, meals, and drinks. They can also go out to dance or visit other friends and _____ and celebrate until the next day.

Questions

1. How is Christmas celebrated in Columbia?
2. What did you especially like about the way Lenor described the way Christmas and New Years were celebrated in Columbia?
3. What questions would you like to ask her about the way those holidays were celebrated?
4. What are important holidays in your country?
5. How would you compare the way holidays were celebrated in your original country and are celebrated in the United States?
6. What is your favorite holiday in your original country?
7. What is your favorite holiday in the United States?

Student Voices From the West Indian Islands
George Demetrion (Editor)
Manager of Community-Based Programming
Literacy Volunteers of Greater Hartford

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Lesson One

Lesson Two

Lesson Three

Lesson Four

Lesson Five

Lesson Six

Lesson Seven

Lesson Eight

Lesson Nine

Lesson Ten

Student Voices From the West Indian Islands
George Demetrion (Editor)
Manager of Community-Based Programming
Literacy Volunteers of Greater Hartford

I love to come to class to learn to read and write. I am getting an education so I don't have to ask people to help me read and write. I can help myself. I am asking God to help me remember everything.

John Hawkins

Lesson One
A Traveler

First, I'm a Jamaican and I come here as a foreigner in 1977. I come here to better my life. Back home some kids have it hard. I come from a family of 12 kids. I was the youngest. I came here when I was 29 years old and had \$30 in my pocket. I came to Hartford because I had family to stay with. I stayed with my sister. I looked for the same kind of job I was doing in Jamaica. I do autobody work. I looked in the newspaper for jobs. I did find a job off New Britain Avenue doing autobody work. I had to relearn things the American way. Tools are different. In Jamaica everything was by hand. Here everything was by machine.

In about a year and a half, I got a better job. I buy a car—a brand new car—a Camero Z-28. It was gray. I got my own apartment. After that I had a son. His name is Brian. I bought my own house. I was working at Steben Autobody and then Grody Chevrolet. Then I went to Hoffman Oldsmobile. I was there eight years.

Now I don't work for any company. Now I have a lot of experience, and I work for myself. I'm trying to own a business but I'm still working on it, I know that someday everything will work out fine.

I still travel to Jamaica every year to see my mother. She is 88 years old. I have one brother and one sister in Jamaica. It's nice in Jamaica.

Frank Gray

Word	Syllables	Write sentence
foreigner	for-eig-ner (3 syllables)	
youngest	young-est (2 syllables)	
because	be-cause (2 syllables)	
autobody	au-to-bo-dy (4 syllables)	
different	dif-fer-ent (3 syllables)	
everything	ev-er-y-thing (4 syllables)	
machine	ma-chine (2 syllables)	
company	com-pan-y (3 syllables)	
experience	ex-per-i-ence (4 syllables)	
company	com-pan-y (3 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

First, I'm a Jamaican and I come here as a _____ in 1977. I come here to _____ my life. Back home some kids have it hard. I come from a family of 12 _____. I was the youngest. I came here when I was 29 years old and had \$30 in my _____. I came to

Hartford _____ I had family to stay with. I stayed with my sister. I looked for the same kind of job I was doing in _____. I do autobody _____. I looked in the newspaper for jobs. I did find a job off New Britain Avenue doing autobody work. I had to relearn things the _____ way. Tools are different. In Jamaica everything was by _____. Here everything was by _____. In about a year and a half, I got a better _____. I buy a car—a brand new car—a Camero Z-28. It was gray. I got my own apartment. After that I had a _____. His name is Brian. I bought my own _____. I was working at Steben Autobody and then Grody Chevrolet. Then I went to Hoffman Oldsmobile. I was there eight years.

Now I don't work for any _____. Now I have a lot of _____ and I work for _____. I'm trying to own a _____ but I'm still working on it, I know that someday everything will work out fine.

I still travel to Jamaica every year to see my mother. She is 88 years old. I have one brother and one sister in Jamaica. It's _____ in Jamaica.

Questions

1. What was Frank's life like in Jamaica?
2. Why did Frank come to the United States?
3. What was his life like in the United States?
4. What did Frank do for work? How was work different in the United States than in Jamaica?
5. What does Frank want to do for work now?
6. How is your life different or similar to Frank's?
7. Write a letter to Frank. What would you like to say?

Lesson Two

I Have a Good Life

When I first came to America, I'd do landscaping, and be laid off. I would do construction for a month, and be laid off. I went to several states working. I worked in New Jersey, Wisconsin twice, Illinois, and Louisiana. I picked corn in Illinois and we worked really hard. We went to work early in the morning and people said, "If you don't want to work hard, don't be in Wilso's group" (They called me Wilso). Those were the good days. Living with your fellow man.

After I got married, I got a job at Holo Krome Screw Company in Hartford, and then I got a job at the Royal Typewriter Factory. I worked there 28 years until they moved out in 1985. At that time my wife was sick and I had to care for her, so I didn't work anymore.

You must always fear the Lord. That's how come I make it in life. Plus you must work. And when you work you must be honest. At Royal, I pulled orders for shipping and the Lord give me the gift to do the work there, even without education. That's why they trusted me. I had a key and sometimes when I worked overtime, I would lock up the place myself.

I was a trustee at Shiloh Baptist Church, and I was a Man of the Year. If I had the education, my calling would have been a politician. I would be for the little man. I would let them know I couldn't be bought. They'd have to kill me first.

Headley Wilson

Words	Syllables	Write Sentence
construction	con-struc-tion (3 syllables)	
early	ear-ly (2 syllables)	
until	un-til (2 syllables)	
anymore	an-y-more (3 syllables)	
honest	hon-est (2 syllables)	
education	ed--u-ca-tion (4 syllables)	
overtime	o-ver-time (3 syllables)	
myself	my-self (2 syllables)	
politician	pol-i-ti-cian (4 syllables)	
bought	bought (one syllable)	

Fill in the blanks

When I first _____ to America, I'd do landscaping, and be laid off. I would do construction for a month, and be _____ off. I went to several states working. I _____ in New Jersey, Wisconsin twice, Illinois, and Louisiana. I picked corn in Illinois and we worked really hard. We went to work early in the morning and people said, "If you don't want to work hard, don't be in Wilso's _____" (They called me Wilso). Those were the good _____. Living with your fellow man.

After I got _____, I got a job at Holo Krome Screw Company in Hartford, and then I got a _____ at the Royal Typewriter Factory.

I worked there 28 years until they moved out in 1985. At that time my wife was _____ and I had to care for her, so I didn't work anymore.

You must always _____ the Lord. That's how come I make it in life. Plus you must _____. And when you work you must be _____. At Royal, I pulled orders for shipping and the Lord give me the gift to do the work there, even without _____. That's why they trusted me. I had a key and sometimes when I worked overtime, I would _____ up the place myself.

I was a trustee at Shiloh Baptist Church, and I was a Man of the Year. If I had the education, my calling would have been a _____. I would be for the little man. I would let them know I couldn't be bought. They'd have to kill me first.

Questions

1. What kind of work did Headley do when he first came to the United States? How do you think he liked it?
2. What was Headley like as a supervisor?
3. How did Headley's work change after he got married? What kind of a worker was he?
4. What values were most important to Headley? How do you know?
5. In what ways is your life similar or different from Headley's?
6. Write a letter to Headley. What would you like to say?

Lesson Three A Hard Life

In Jamaica, I have it hard. It's hard to make a life in Jamaica, especially for people who can't read. We have to do mostly farm work. I got picked up by American farmers who come up and pick apples and tobacco, and cut cane. After I finish work for that farmer, I stayed in America and didn't go back. I got my papers straight, and then, and then I start to work in a restaurant. After that I work at a furniture company. Then I was working at a brick place, where they make bricks, and after working so hard in that company the boss think I deserve an easier job. So they tried to offer me an easier position, but I just couldn't get through with it because of my education.

So I got fed up of working every little place and not getting paid what I deserved, so I decided to go back to school, and that school is Literacy Volunteers. I go back to school, and that was the best thing I could ever do for myself. I got problems all along with everything I try to do because of my lack of education. Too much reading and writing everywhere.

Some of these jobs don't need reading and writing too much, but once they find out you can't read they put it in your face all the time. So I just don't take a chance of taking a job where I know I can't handle the paperwork, even if I know I can do the job. But I'm getting there now, and I give thanks for this school. The patience the teachers have with me, they don't make a mockery out of me when I don't make a mistake. For a person who can't read, you really need a teacher with patience and understanding.

Lenard Williams

Word	Syllables	Write Sentences
stayed	stayed (one syllable)	
straight	straight (one syllable)	
furniture	fur-ni-ture (3 syllables)	
company	com-pan-y (3 syllables)	
position	po-si-tion (3 syllables)	
because	be-cause (2 syllables)	
education	ed-u-ca-tion (4 syllables)	
deserve	de-serve (2 syllables)	
through	through (one syllable)	
everywhere	ev-er-y-where (3 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

In Jamaica, I have it _____. It's hard to make a life in Jamaica, especially for people who can't _____. We have to do mostly farm work. I got picked up by American farmers who come up and pick apples and tobacco, and _____ cane. After I finish work for that farmer, I stayed in America and _____ go back. I got my papers straight, and then, and then I start to _____ in a restaurant. After that I work at a furniture company. Then I was working at a brick place, where they make _____, and after working so hard in that company the boss think I deserve an easier job. So they tried

to offer me an _____ position, but I just couldn't get through with it because of my education.

So I got fed up of working every little place and not getting paid what I _____, so I decided to go back to school, and that school is Literacy Volunteers. I go back to school, and that was the best thing I could ever do for _____. I got problems all along with everything I try to do because of my lack of education. Too much reading and _____ everywhere.

Some of these jobs don't need reading and writing too much, but once they find out you _____ read they put it in your face all the time. So I just don't take a chance of taking a job where I know I can't handle the _____, even if I know I can do the job. But I'm getting there now, and I give thanks for this school. The patience the teachers have with me, they don't make a mockery out of me when I don't make a _____. For a person who can't read, you really need a teacher with patience and _____.

Questions

1. How did Lenard get to the United States?
2. What was his early work life like in the United States?
3. In what ways did his work career progress?
4. What problems remained for him?
5. Why is learning to read and write important to him?
6. What does he say about what is important in helping an adult learn to read and write?
7. In what ways is your experience similar to Lenard's?
8. Write a letter to Lenard? What would you like to say?

Lesson Four

Music is Good for the Soul

Now that I am getting there with my reading and writing, I feel good about my music. Since I was 12 or 13 I was practicing music. I was pretty good at music and still am. I like to sing. I like to sing reggae. I sing my own original music—about people, about the trees, the grass, about anything. You have to rhyme the words and make sure it makes sense. You sing about the things you experience; about what's going on today in the world; about things people doing around you that you think not right; and sing about the people doing wrong things and think it's ok.

Lenard Williams

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
getting	get-ting (2 syllables)	
original	or-i-gi-nal (4 syllables)	
about	a-bout (2 syllables)	
rhyme	Rhyme (one syllable)	
experience	ex-per-i-ence (4 syllables)	
people	peo-ple (2 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

Now that I am getting there with my _____ and writing, I feel good about my music. Since I was 12 or 13 I was practicing _____. I was pretty good at _____ and still am. I like to sing. I like to sing reggae. I sing my own original music—about people, about the trees, the grass, about anything. You have to _____ the words and make sure it makes sense. You sing about the things you _____; about what's going on today in the world; about things people doing around you that you think not _____; and sing about the people doing wrong things and think it's ok.

Questions

1. What does Lenard like to do?
2. What kind of music does he like to sing?
3. What are his songs about?
4. What kind of music do you like?
5. As a group write a song.

Lesson Five

Sharing Experiences

When I was in Jamaica I saw people who live in America come and go. My dream was to come to America to expand on the experiences I have in Jamaica. I wanted to come to America so that I could return to Jamaica to tell the people I know about the things that I have seen which are different. I have seen a lot of factories where people can get work. This is different from where I come from where people are self employed.

John Hawkins

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
America	A-mer-i-ca (four syllables)	
expand	ex-pand (2 syllables)	
Jamiaca	Ja-mai-ca (3 syllables)	
different	dif-fer-ent (3 syllables)	
factories	fac-tor-ies (3 syllables)	
employed	em-ployed (2 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

When I was in Jamaica I saw people who live in _____ come and go. My dream was to come to America to expand on the _____ I have in Jamaica. I wanted to come to America so that I could return to Jamaica to tell the people I know about the things that I have seen

which are _____. I have seen a lot of _____ where people can get work. This is different from where I come from where people are self _____.

Questions

1. What do you think John means when he said that he wants to expand the on the experiences he had in Jamaica?
2. Why did John want to return to Jamaica?
3. What do you think he would say about his experience in America?
4. In what way might his life be different when he returns to Jamaica after living in America?
5. How do you think John's experience of living in Jamaica has influenced the way he has thought about life in America?
6. How do you think life is different in America than in Jamaica? What do you base your ideas on?
7. Think about important life changes you have experienced. How have they changed you? What have you learned?
8. What would you like to share about those changes with others?

Lesson Six
My Experiences in the United States

I want to read and write more. I love to read and write because I want to share letters with my family who lives in Jamaica. I want to share with them my experience in America. I want to tell them that I have driven on highways with many more cars and tractor-trailers than are in Jamaica

Ferron Taylor

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
share	share (one syllable)	
because	be-cause (2 syllables)	
experience	ex-per-i-ence (4 syllables)	
driven	dri-ven (2 syllables)	
highways	high-ways (2 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

I want to read and _____ more. I love to read and write because I want to share _____ with my family who lives in Jamaica. I want to share with them my _____ in America. I want to tell them that I have driven on _____ with many more cars and tractor-trailers than are in Jamaica

Questions

1. Why does Ferron want to read and write more?
2. What does he want to tell his family about America?

3. Who would you like to write letters to? What would you like to say?

Lesson Seven My Garden

I plant vegetables in my garden—tomatoes, red and green peppers, peas, carrots, cabbages, cucumbers, broccoli, and cauliflower. I sow some seeds and also put in seedlings.

My garden is six plants in size. I work in the garden mostly in the morning. I weed and water. When the vegetables are ripe I pick them for my family to eat. I give some to my friends and sell some. Working in my garden is good for my body and soul.

Ferron Taylor

Word	Syllable	Write Sentence
vegetables	veg-e-ta-bles (4 syllables)	
garden	gar-den (2 syllables)	
morning	mor-ning (2 syllables)	
friends	friends (one syllable)	

Fill in the Blanks

I plant _____ in my garden—tomatoes, red and green peppers, peas, carrots, cabbages, cucumbers, broccoli, and cauliflower. I sow some _____ and also put in seedlings.

My garden is six _____ in size. I work in the garden mostly in the _____. I weed and water. When the vegetables are ripe I pick them for my _____ to eat. I give some to my friends and _____ some. Working in my garden is good for my body and _____.

Questions

1. Describe Ferron's garden.
2. What does Ferron do with the vegetables he grows?
3. Why do you think Ferron says that working in his garden is good for his body and his soul?
4. What is good for your body and soul?

Lesson Eight

The World is on My Shoulders

Who knows what tomorrow will bring when you're young and gifted? Some people were born with a spoon in their mouth, and they don't know it.

Well, I'm not saying I was born with a gold spoon in my mouth, but as life goes on, the God that I serve will bring me through the bad times and the good times. You are the one to make sure that you don't make the same mistakes that your parents made in their lives. Some parents make it good and some make it bad. Mine—it was bad and good.

For instance, my father was the good and the bad. The bad is that he did not send me to school. The good thing is my father was a good father to me. He would take me to various places that I would enjoy. Plus he took me to work with him; he said if you don't have education you must have a trade. But since I came to America I found out that when you are living in the U.S.A., if you want to better yourself you have to have education. So that is what I'm working on now. So that I can get my G.E.D. and go on with my life.

The world is on my shoulders because I am trying to do everything at the same time. I'm trying to get my G.E.D., trying to get a real job, trying to be a family man, trying to be a friend and husband to my wife, trying to make clothes (I have just bought a brand new sewing machine), and I'm trying to be a dancer at the same time.

Coming to America was the most beautiful thing that ever happened to me. I've got to go back to school and to get back the things that I missed in Jamaica as a kid. Going back to school as an adult is the best thing that can happen to an adult.

Education is the key to life and society. Society is what makes the world a better place for boys and girls, mothers and fathers, and especially grandparents. The grandparents are the ones who made it happen for you and me.

Back to education...education is like food. It's like you are on a diet that you have to be on. So that's why you have to grab it while you can. So don't waste time and don't be afraid to come forward and tell the world that you can't read and write, so that you can get help before it's too late. I'm glad that I didn't waste any time. I ran and grabbed it before it grabbed me! I am 45 years old, but with an education I feel like I'm 12 years old. I am on top of the world now.

So boys and girls, moms and dads, grandpas and grandmas, come and get the education diet and set yourselves up and be in good shape. Thanks to all the teachers that help me be on top of the world.

Cecil Bryant

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
tomorrow	to-mor-row (3 syllables)	
mistakes	mis-takes (2 syllables)	
education	ed-u-ca-tion (4 syllables)	
various	va-ri-ous (3 syllables)	
shoulders	shoul-ders (2 syllables)	
especially	es-pec-i-al-ly (5 syllables)	

Who knows what _____ will bring when you're young and gifted? Some people were born with a spoon in their mouth, and they don't _____ it.

Well, I'm not saying I was born with a gold spoon in my mouth, but as life goes on, the God that I serve will bring me through the bad times and the _____ times. You are the one to make sure that you don't make the same mistakes that your parents made in their lives. Some parents make it good and some make it bad. Mine—it was bad and good.

For instance, my father was the good and the bad. The _____ is that he did not send me to school. The _____ thing is my father was a good father to me. He would take me to various _____ that I would enjoy. Plus he took me to work with him; he said if you don't have education you must have a _____. But since I came to America I found out that when you are living in the U.S.A., if you want to better yourself you have to have education. So that is what I'm working on now. So that I can get my G.E.D. and go on with my _____.

The world is on my _____ because I am trying to do everything at the same time. I'm trying to get my G.E.D., trying to get a real job, trying to be a _____ man, trying to be a friend and husband to my wife, trying to make clothes (I have just bought a brand new sewing machine), and I'm trying to be a dancer at the same time.

Coming to America was the most _____ thing that ever happened to me. I've got to go back to school and to get back the things that I missed in Jamaica as a kid. Going back to school as an _____ is the best thing that can happen to an adult.

Education is the key to _____ and society. Society is what makes the world a better place for boys and girls, mothers and fathers, and

especially grandparents. The grandparents are the ones who made it happen for you and me.

Back to education...education is like _____. It's like you are on a diet that you have to be on. So that's why you have to grab it while you can. So don't waste time and don't be _____ to come forward and tell the world that you can't read and write, so that you can get help before it's too late. I'm glad that I didn't waste any time. I ran and grabbed it before it grabbed me! I am 45 years old, but with an education I feel like I'm 12 years old. I am on top of the world now.

So boys and girls, moms and dads, grandpas and grandmas, come and get the education diet and set yourselves up and be in good shape. Thanks to all the teachers that help me be on top of the world.

Questions

1. What do we learn from Cecil about his childhood?
2. What did his father say to him?
3. What did Cecil learn when he came to the United States?
4. What does Cecil think about education?
5. In what ways do you agree or disagree with Cecil's understanding of education?
6. If you were going to write a letter to school children about the importance of education, what would you say? Write that letter.
7. If you were going to write a letter to adults who couldn't read too well about the importance of education, what would you say? Write that letter.
8. If you were going to write a letter to the newspaper on the importance for adults on learning how to read and write, what would you say? Write and submit that letter to a newspaper.

Lesson Nine

My Life Story

I was born in Jamaica, Manchester in the District of Huntley. I am from a poor family. I was told by my mother that before I was born my father took off for England. He didn't care about me. Growing up, I could say I didn't have a father. I don't know how we survived. As time went by things got worse. My mother had more kids and the fathers kept running. My mother ended up having seven children. She had to work and take care of us.

I was the first child for my mother. I am the only child for my father. He got married, but his wife couldn't have any children. I could remember myself in grade one up to grade two. At that time, I was going to school every day. I could see myself clearly and know that I was going to read and write. As time went by, I started to drop out of school. Sometimes I would not go to school for three months and it got worse and worse every day.

When I was nine, my father write my mother saying his wife is coming to live in Jamaica, Kingston and he would like me to go and live with her. My mother would not say no. She was glad to get rid of one of us. Time had come for me to go. I can't forget that morning. I was so unhappy leaving home for the first time. After a while, I didn't leave home anymore and my stepmother let me feel at home. It took a while for me to get in a school, but when I did I could not remember a thing. I did not love school any more. When I got home all I want to do is go out and play with friends. As the time went by, things started to get bad. My father stopped sending money for us. Then our house burned down. My stepmother was not working and all we had to depend on was what my father sent. The time came my stepmother told me I have to go back to my mother, so I went. My mother was glad to see me. At that time, I was fifteen years old and I didn't go back to school.

When I see the importance of learning to read and write I could not do anything about it. It was always my dream to go back to school. So, I came to America. I go to several schools here, but did not get through. I could not pass the test. I was about to give up when I heard about Literacy Volunteers. I called them up and they told me the same thing the other school told me. I have to take a test, but L.V. was different. They take me and my sister and we are doing fine. Thank God for L.V. and all the teachers. Here ends my story.

Fitzroy McClintock

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
survived	sur-vived (2 syllables)	
worse	Worse (one syllable)	
children	chil-dren (2 syllables)	
sometimes	(some-times (2 syllables)	
unhappy	un-hap-py (3 syllables)	
several	sev-er-al (3 syllables)	
different	dif-fer-ent (3 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

I was _____ in Jamaica, Manchester in the District of Huntley. I am from a poor _____. I was told by my mother that before I was born my _____ took off for England. He didn't care about me. Growing up, I could say I didn't _____ a father. I don't know how we _____. As time went by things got worse. My mother had more

kids and the _____ kept running. My mother ended up having seven _____. She had to work and take care of us.

I was the first child for my _____. I am the only child for my father. He got married, but his wife couldn't have any _____. I could remember myself in grade one up to grade two. At that time, I was going to _____ every day. I could see myself clearly and know that I was going to _____ and write. As time went by, I started to _____ out of school. Sometimes I would not go to school for three months and it got _____ and worse every day.

When I was nine, my father write my mother saying his wife is _____ to live in Jamaica, Kingston and he would like me to go and _____ with her. My mother would not say no. She was glad to get _____ of one of us. Time had come for me to go. I can't forget that morning. I was so _____ leaving home for the first time. After a while, I didn't leave _____ anymore and my stepmother let me feel at home. It took a while for me to get in a _____, but when I did I could not remember a thing. I did not love school any more. When I got home all I want to do is go out and _____ with friends. As the time went by, things started to get bad. My father stopped sending _____ for us. Then our house burned down. My stepmother was not working and all we had to _____ on was what my father sent. The time came my stepmother told me I have to go back to my mother, so I went. My mother was _____ to see me. At that time, I was fifteen years old and I didn't go back to _____.

When I see the _____ of learning to read and write I could not do anything about it. It was always my _____ to go back to school. So, I came to America. I go to several schools here, but did not get through. I could not _____ the test. I was about to give up when I heard about Literacy Volunteers. I called them up and they told me the same thing the other school _____ me. I have to take a test, but L.V. was different. They take me and my sister and we are doing fine. Thank God for L.V. and all the teachers. Here ends my story.

Questions

1. What was Fitzroy's situation as he was growing up?
2. What do you think he was experiencing?
3. What were Fitzroy's hopes when he went to school for the first time?
4. What happened to Fitzroy when he was nine? How do you think this effected him?
5. What happened to Fitzroy when he went to school the second time? How did his attitude to school change? Why
6. How did Fitzroy finally get back to his mother? How do you think he felt?
7. How did he feel about going to school to learn to read and write as an adult?
8. What stands out for you in Fitzroy's story?

Lesson Ten

My Life Story

I am a man that never had much of an education. My name is Roderick Peters. I came to Hartford from Jamaica in 1965. I couldn't read and write when I came to this country because I didn't stay long in school, but since I came here I got the chance of going to school. I have been going to the Literacy Volunteers for the past two years. I'm doing much better now than before. I'm very proud of myself. I can read a little now. I know to be illiterate is embarrassing. I have a job that calls for a lot of reading. My worst problem is spelling some of the words. If I see it I could know how to break it up and spell it, sometime I might get it right.

It's very difficult when you don't know how to read. Sometime a girl might give me her phone number and her name so I can call her. Then a few days later I would like to give her a call but don't remember her name. I see it but I can't call her because I can't read what it say. That's why I know that education is important. I don't know about some people, but to me it is. I don't go out of town because I can't read the street signs. So I don't go anywhere, I just stay home. I would like to be able to read the street signs. When that day comes, I will be very happy. Someway, somehow I will learn to read. I would say I'm very fortunate for the opportunity.

This is my story, my life. My first stop from Jamaica was New York. I lived with my uncle. Then I came to Hartford to live.

My first job was working at Cheney Brothers in Manchester. I worked on a machine. I was there for two years. My next job was at Royal typewriter. I got married while working there. I got divorced three years later. Then I moved to Chicago. I started school to learn how to read and write. I was also learning to cook. I was in Chicago until my aunt asked me if I could come home and help her run her

restaurant. I regret that I ever left. I was doing very well and I was way ahead.

After moving to Hartford, I started night school. I felt the class was too fast for me. Then I started with Literacy Volunteers. I go three nights a week. I spend two nights with my tutor and one night in group. I am studying very hard to improve myself. I hope I will accomplish something in life. I would like to learn to read and write as much as I can. I also want to learn to speak English properly.

Sometimes I get mail but I can't read it. Every day I tell myself learning to read is very important in life. It might take time but I am working very hard at it. I hope there will be a way for me to get ahead. Sometimes I ask myself why it is so hard.

It is hard for me to drive on a trip by myself because I can't read the road signs. I often get lost. I would like to travel but I'm scared to take the chance.

I believe if there is a will, there will be a way in life. I am taking one step at a time because I believe in myself. I come to school because I want to learn to read and write. My goal in life is to read without any help. When I accomplish reading and writing, my goal is to be a chef.

Roderick Peters



Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
never	ne-ver (2 syllables)	
education	ed-u-ca-tion (4 syllables)	
country	(coun-try (2 syllables)	
because	be-cause (2 syllables)	
going	go-ing (2 syllables)	
doing	do-ing (2 syllables)	
accomplish	ac-com-plish (3 syllables)	
problem	problem (2 syllables)	
difficult	dif-fi-cult (3 syllables)	
fortunate	for-tu-nate (3 syllables)	
opportunity	op-por-tun-i-ty (5 syllables)	
regret	re-gret (2 syllables)	
ahead	a-head (2 syllables)	
myself	my-self (2 syllables)	
scared	scared (2 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

I am a _____ that never had much of an education. My name is Roderick Peters. I came to Hartford from Jamaica in 1965. I couldn't read and write when I came to this _____ because I didn't stay long in school, but since I came here I got the chance of going to school. I have been going to the Literacy Volunteers for the past two years. I'm doing much _____ now than before. I'm very _____ of myself. I can read a little now. I know to be illiterate is embarrassing. I have a job that calls for a lot of _____. My worst problem is _____ some of the words. If I see it I could know how to break it up and spell it, sometime I might get it right.

It's very _____ when you don't know how to read. Sometime a girl might give me her phone number and her name so I can call her. Then a few days later I would like to give her a call but don't _____ her name. I see it but I can't _____ her because I can't read what it say. That's why I know that education is important. I don't know about some people, but to me it is. I don't go out of _____ because I can't read the street signs. So I don't go _____, I just stay home. I would like to be able to read the street _____. When that day comes, I will be very happy. Someway, somehow I will learn to read. I would say I'm very fortunate for the opportunity.

This is my story, my life. My first stop from Jamaica was New York. I _____ with my uncle. Then I came to Hartford to live.

My first job was _____ at Cheney Brothers in Manchester. I worked on a machine. I was there for two years. My next job was at Royal typewriter. I got married while working there. I got _____ three years later. Then I moved to Chicago. I started _____ to learn how to read and write. I was also _____ to cook. I was in Chicago until

my aunt asked me if I could come home and help her run her _____ . I regret that I ever left. I was doing very _____ and I was way ahead.

After moving to Hartford, I started _____ school. I felt the class was too _____ for me. Then I started with Literacy Volunteers. I go three nights a _____. I spend two nights with my tutor and one night in _____. I am studying very hard to _____ myself. I hope I will _____ something in life. I would like to _____ to read and write as much as I can. I also want to learn to speak _____ properly. Sometimes I get mail but I _____ read it. Every day I tell myself learning to _____ is very important in life. It might take time but I am working very _____ at it. I hope there will be a way for me to get ahead. Sometimes I ask myself why it is so _____.

It is hard for me to _____ on a trip by myself because I can't read the _____ signs. I often get lost. I would like to travel but I'm _____ to take the chance.

I believe if there is a will, there will be a _____ in life. I am taking one _____ at a time because I believe in myself. I come to school _____ I want to learn to read and write. My goal in life is to read without any help. When I _____ reading and writing, my goal is to be a chef.

Questions

1. What problems does Roderick talk about in not being able to read and write well? Are they similar or different from what you encounter?
2. What did Roderick do when he came to the United States?
3. What was he doing in Chicago? How was he doing there?
4. Why did he return to Hartford? What did he think about that move?
5. What did he do when he returned to Hartford? How is school now for him?
6. What stands out for you in Roderick's story?

Voices from the American South
George Demetrion (Editor)
Manager of Community-Based Programming
Literacy Volunteers of Greater Hartford

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Lesson One

Lesson Two

Lesson Three

Lesson Four

Lesson Five

Lesson Six

Lesson Seven

Lesson Eight

Lesson Nine

Lesson Ten

Voices from the American South
George Demetrion (Editor)
Manager of Community-Based Programming
Literacy Volunteers of Greater Hartford

Lesson One

My grandmother raised me since I was a baby. Oh yeah, she [Douglas's mother] came in, you know. I seen her, but as far as living with her, my grandmother said that's out. I was just going to visit her. And I might spend the night with her, but as far as living and staying, my grandmother did that. Beautiful woman, and you know, I loved her so hard.

I loved my mother too, don't get me wrong, but, you know, it was basically that I stayed with my grandmother, and she raised me up to be a man. She taught me how to sew, "You're gonna need this, you know." And I appreciate it, right now, 'cause when I did get out on my own after she died, I was basically on my own afterwards. But I had met this lady, that girl that I got my kids by, and mostly I had to do the cooking 'cause she was young and she didn't know too much about cooking and stuff. And it was very nice, you know; but it was something I know that my grandmother taught me how to do, and I know I had to learn it 'cause she said I would have to be on my own one day....

It was beautiful, you know, just the way I was brought up. I had to go to church every Sunday. My grandmother's house, my grandmother's rules. "Can't go to church, can't go outside and play," you know. And I never forget, Christmas fell on Sunday one time, and I didn't want to go to church, and my grandmother said, "you don't go to church, you don't play with none of your toys," you know, so I ended up going to church. That took care of that.

I got this job. . . and I was loading trucks. They called me on the intercom and I couldn't go 'cause I was giving them a hand on the trucks. So the man came in the trailer and called me, told the other

guy that was with me, told him, "Can you step out of the trailer for a minute?" I said, "What's wrong, why you telling him to step out the trailer?" And he told me. I had a case of Welch's Juice in my hand, and he told me, he said, "Your grandmother just died." Man! I dropped the juice and ran home. It was probably from where I was, 'bout fifteen miles. I started running--I didn't stop till I got home, till I got all the way home. I didn't have a thought about no bus, no ride. I ran all the way home.

And when I got there they said 'bout 10 minutes before I got in the door, this lady [a neighbor] pulled the pillow from under my grandmother's head, and that's when she died. . . You know, the doctor had given up, that's when he called and said she was dead. When I got there, they said she was trying to hold out till she seen me, she kept asking to see me. And when I got there they said that Mrs. Tiggs, she had just pulled the pillow from under my grandmother's head, and all of a sudden she [had] passed out. I looked at that lady and I wanted to kill her. All I could do was sit there, just beat my head against the wall.

That was one of the hurtingest feelings I ever had in my life, you know. And everybody asked, why didn't I cry. You ever been hurt so bad you just can't cry? It was just like that. And I just wanted to be by myself. I knew what I was doing and I didn't know what I was doing. And I walked around, walked around. . . and I wasn't saying nothing to nobody. I did that for a couple of weeks. If I wanted something, I'd do my own cooking and stuff.

At the wake, everybody was crying. My mom, she was boo-hooing so, and aunts and all, they were doing it. And I didn't know what to think, you know. I looked at her again at the funeral. And they brought her in. . . it kind of got to me then. And a few tears came out, but not like my mom and them were crying.

It got to be more, though, when they put her in the ground. I didn't know what to do then. I just said, "I'm on my own now." And my mom, she comes and says, "No you ain't, I'm with you." I didn't even want to talk to her. I said, "You still can't take the place that she had." And she said, "Why are you talking to me like that?" I said, "Don't you know?" And I just left it like that. . . .

Well, the values my grandmother taught me, Christian life, she learned me 'bout that. And the way to take care of myself. And the meaning of working, that's one thing she did teach me that. And the meaning of a dollar 'cause a dollar is very precious. The only way you're gonna really survive in this world, now, is if you get a job.

Stealing and stuff like that, she didn't approve of that. And I got one beating about stealing. My cousin she was there and she wanted some stockings, right? So I go up to the store with her. And I wanted some money, and she was going to pay \$2 and something for the stockings, so I said, "Okay." So I got the stockings, the stockings she wanted and everything. She got back home and told my grandmother what I did. Boy, you talk about a whipping! My grandmother made me take the stockings back and give 'em to the man and then she beat my butt all the way back to the house. I bet my grandmother beat me for 'bout half an hour. And she seen it wasn't really hurting me so she made me take off my clothes. Man, that was the worst whipping she ever gave. That's when she said, "I work too hard for you to be going around stealing." She was going back and forth in tears. "I don't have the money to get you out of jail. As long as you're not working, whatever you want that I don't have to give you, just do without. If you're working, just pay for it yourself, or just do without it." So the value of a dollar, and the honesty of working, that's what I got from her. And how to survive in my own life, one day when I'd have to be out on my own. That's about it, I guess.

Douglass Taylor

Words	Syllables	Write Sentence
grandmother	grand-moth-er (3 syllables)	
beautiful	beau-ti-ful (3 syllables)	
basically	bas-ic-a-lly (4 syllables)	
funeral	fun-er-al (3 syllables)	
precious	prec-ious (2 syllables)	
whipping	whip-ping (2 syllables)	
whatever	what-ev-er (3 syllables)	

Questions

1. What did Douglass learn from his grandmother?
2. What were Douglass's grandmother's rules? What did he think of them? What do you think of them?
3. How did Douglass's grandmother's death affect him?
4. What do you think Douglass remembers most about his grandmother?
5. Is there someone in your life that reminds you of someone like Douglass's grandmother? What would you like to say to that person?

Lesson Two

School Days: Separate and Unequal

I was working. I had to go to work on the farm. People used to ask my daddy if it was raining and too wet to go into the fields. People used to ask my father, "Why do you keep your boys working all the time?" And he made a statement that, "Long as they are working, I know they're not in trouble. I can go anywhere, I don't have to worry about them going to jail or getting in trouble, nothing like that."

He kept me working during the time I was going to school. I started going to school when I was seven years old. And I was going to school half-and-half. I went when my brothers went. If they didn't go, I didn't go. When I was about fifteen years old, I stopped going to school. I had to work steady on the farm. By eighteen, I was full time working.

I had to work: pick cotton, strip corn, we had to gather all the crops. Then we'd go to school 'round November, December, up through January, about three months in school. Rest of the time we had to work in the field.

Well, daddy wanted us to go to school, but we were the only people he had to work. He wouldn't hire nobody. We were sharecropping, so we had to get our own stuff. So if he hired anybody to do it, by the end of the year, the Man's gonna take out every bit we made. My daddy had to pay out his half to pay the people on the farm. Just like, if you come and work for us by the day, you maybe work three weeks, four weeks but that all adds up. And that's why we had to work, to keep from hiring somebody to work.

Some kids had the chance to go to school year-round, but we had to plough with a mule. A mule had to pull the plow, someone had to pull

grass, rake the grass up. Some kids didn't have to do what we did. Some kids were going to school when we wasn't. So we had no choice. And we had to do what our parents tell us; not to say, "Daddy, I ain't going out in that field today. I'm going to school." He said, "Go to the field." We went to work. So it wasn't no choice we had.

I don't know whether they cared or not, but nobody do nothing about it. None of the white folks did 'specially [when it come to] black folks. See, the black people, they worked hard and the white kids went to school.

Back in those days we were going to school, we got the books that the white folks didn't use, that they'd done used up. We didn't get the same grade [of education] the white people got. That's why a lot of white people in the South have higher advantage than black people have. They were going to a different school. I never went to school with a white kid 'cause they were afraid of. . .the black people gonna rape the white kids. That's what was in the back of their minds. And we didn't know anything about that. So, that wasn't a problem. We didn't know nothing about playing with white people. We were growing up around them but not growing up to their house and playing with white people like kids play together today. And until '54, '55 they were prejudiced. Until Martin Luther King came and brought civil rights, that's when a lot of changes broke the partition. He's the one who broke the partition.

We had separate schools. So, that's one of the reasons nobody didn't make nobody go to school, if they didn't. And when they dropped out, or they did something disorderly and the teacher expelled them out, they couldn't go back to that school. Maybe they could go to another school, but they couldn't go to that school.

I went to the school in the country, two miles from my home. Walked. Weren't no bus. White kids were riding on the buses, we were riding on feet. White kids were going into town to the school, but the black

people had to walk [up until] the last four, five years of the fifties. Then in the fifties, they started riding the kids to school on the bus.

We had pretty good schools, school was very nice. But they got the books from the white people. They used to give us their old books. Seems like they had better teachers teaching the white kids. And back in those days—I want to make it plainer—when a kid gets to twelve, thirteen years, they want you to call them Mister. Not, say I call you "John" or "Jane." "Mr. John." And they were quick to call you "Boy." They didn't care. And they want you to say, "Yessir." Not "Yes"—"Yessir," back in those days. And I went down there, good while back, and I said, "Yes," once, and one got mad 'cause I said "Yes." But I didn't change my "Yes."

Well, the white folks didn't want the black folks to know nothing. They wanted them to be dumb most of their life. There was a time they didn't want them to register to vote. Black folks usually couldn't vote down South. So they passed a law, "Black man can vote anytime." But they didn't want black folks to vote, back in those days. White folks were doing the voting. That's why they could do the blacks the way they want to do them, at that particular date. But today, now since I've been down South, blacks have got the opportunity to get anywhere they want.

Bobbie Lee Hart

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
sharecropping	share-crop-ping (3 syllables)	
advantage	ad-vatage (3 syllables)	
together	to-geth-er (3 syllables)	
partition	par-ti-tion (3 syllables)	
particular	par-tic-u-lar (4 syllables)	
opportunity	op-por-tun-i-ty (5 syllables)	

Questions

1. What do you think of Bobbie's father from what you read?
2. Why was it difficult for Bobbie to go to school?
3. What was sharecropping? How fair do you think it was?
4. How was education different for black folks and for white folks when Bobbie was growing up?
5. Why do you think that was?
6. Do you think separate was equal when it came to opportunities for black and white kids to go to school?
7. What do you know of the Civil Rights Movement?
8. What does Bobbie mean when he said that Martin Luther King Jr. broke down the partition?
9. Do you feel now that the partition is down between blacks and whites or is it still up? Please explain your position.

Lesson Three

Working Hard for a Buck

I guess I started farming for my momma when I was six, seven years old. I started farming, I would hit turf; the plow would knock me down, I had to turn the mules all the way around. The white guy owned the mule, I think. To tell the truth, I only went to the second grade. Yeah, I only went up to the second. Yeh, and after that, you know, I went and got me a real job. You see, why I had to work, I had to help my mother and work.

After the old man died, she didn't farm no more. She went and worked for the white people, you know, clean up and stuff like that, like a maid. I, I didn't have too many jobs. I worked picking flood lice. I worked to the tobacco warehouse selling tobacco. I left there, went hauling pulpwood. So I left there, quit that. You know, I've done quite one thing or another that could make me a buck. I'd make it, you know. I did turpentine. You kill, mop the trees, get the gum out of the tree.

After hauling pulpwood, I worked for the railroad and, then, not that much. Uh, it's been so long I forgot now which railroad. Anyhow, [hauling pulpwood] they put me in the side tray, I was there for about three or four months. I was cutting trees down, trimming them off, you know. I cut them in half, cut them in half. I don't know why I worked with pulpwood instead of farming. I was more into money just like they do around here, more profit. You could go out there and haul, yourself. You could make yourself fifty to sixty dollars a day. If you worked, you got to work, sometimes you could make yourself more. I could tell you, for the money, what I'm paying up here for a house, right. I could take the same amount of money and go down South and get three acres of land, and put about three houses for the money I'm making up here.

I think I was twenty-five to twenty-six, somewhere around there. You know, they say, "Come to Hartford, Connecticut. You'll make big

money, big money, make good money." So I come, I came to Hartford in 1959. You have a lot of people tell you, "You can do this, you can do that," you know. I [rode] with my uncle. He brought me up in a car, a station wagon. He worked for Heublin for about thirty some odd years. They make all the liquor. I have an idea they make all of it. They make all the liquor. I think they do every damn thing, I think they make everything there. I've never been in it, I've ridden by it but I've never been in it.

In Patton, [Georgia] I got to haul coal, bring it to people's houses, down in the basement, put it in their heaters, you know. [I got the job after] I was working in a car wash lot, washing cars, and other stuff like that. You know, you know, I was just a handy man trying to make a dollar. Me and another guy also "made a turn," you know, for about two years. Oh, it paid good for the time, about six or seven dollars a day. Sometimes you get nine dollars, and then, you get a big tip, and all like that. It's just, you know, it's just, uh, one of those things. I left there and went for the railroad [Conrail] for twenty, twenty-six years.

I put in ties, put down nails, spike 'em. Not the rail crew, not the rail gang. The section gang. Sometimes it's a gang. Most of them like me, from the South, most, about fifty-fifty, I would say. If you do your part, the work is hard. See right there? The scar right there? When I hit the crowbar, a piece of steel flew up. I hit the crowbar with a hammer, and a piece of steel sheared off the crowbar or something. I think I went through [was out of work] about three or four months. Yeh, they didn't get the steel out of me 'till I got out of the hospital! It was shoved in both ends. The doctor, he didn't care about the fever, he sewed me up to keep me from bleeding so much at St. Francis Hospital in Hartford.

The union ain't no good no more. [They] can't get nothing for you no more. If they had a real union, they would fight for it. They don't have a real union, all they want is the money. Yeh, yeh, they want the money.

If they had a real union there, I'd be right there working there today. You pays all your money, what do you get? A kick up you . . [laughs].

After I got from there, I went to Butler where they fix manholes and things. What do you call it? You go around and fix up different parts of the road, you know, fix manholes. I can't think of his last name. I stayed with him for about two years. I left and went to the state, and they hired me. That was last year. They knew I couldn't read and write but they hired me anyway, for almost about two months, three months. [I'd] patch the holes, cut bushes, pick up paper, stuff like that. And then, I had like an accident, and I stayed out, out of work that whole month, stayed out that whole month. They returned me back to work, put me on light duty. I hurt my chest. And, uh, they put me on light duty, sweeping and [then] took me off that and put me on the truck. I wasn't ready for no truck and all like that. And you get into an accident, there's nothing good if you get into an accident. But I got to explaining that, and they seemed like they can't understand what I was talking about. I stayed on the truck for about a month and a half or so. I told them I couldn't do it, I couldn't run this and I couldn't run that, what do you call that little thing that cuts around posts? Weed wacker, that's what it was! I couldn't learn that, I didn't, and they fired me! Played it cool, got my disability.

Walter Mathis

Words	Syllables	Write Sentence
people	pe-ople (2 syllables)	
farming	farm-ing (2 syllables)	
tobacco	to-bac-co (3 syllables)	
hospital	hos-pi-tal (3 syllables)	

Questions

1. Why didn't Walter have much schooling when he was growing up?
2. How important do you think schooling was at the time and in the region of the country where Walter grew up?
3. Where did he get his real education?
4. Make a list of the jobs Walter had. Identify at least two things about each of those jobs.
5. What kind of skills did Walter need for each of the jobs?
6. What did Walter think about each of those jobs?
7. What do you learn about Walter as you read about his career?
8. After reading about Walter's career, do you think it's important for working folks to belong to a union? Why or why not?
9. What questions would you like to ask him about any of his jobs?
10. What does the story of Walter's career make you think about in your career or life?

Lesson Four Travails of Sharecropping

I was raised on a farm. I didn't go to school like the kids go to school today. Every time I was thinking of going to school. I had to stop and go into the field and work. In the field: breaking land, raking the field up, the grass up. Then go to school again, maybe. I guess out of the whole season, I went about two months to the school. Two or three months out of the whole year, if you pull the days together. 'Cause you'd be out four or five days this week, ploughing, and this week, putting grass in the field 'cause we had to plant. I went to primer, first grade. When I was younger, I went probably a little more. But as I got older, I was able to work when I could have been in school. And that's what kept me from getting an education.

Well, see, I was farming, and what we made on the far we shared. And I could go where I wanted to go. Daddy did not make me leave the house. He gave me the privilege, if I wanted to stay, to run around the farm. You work a whole year, you don't get nothing, just what you got, and due to the fact that, if I'd go out and work on a job, I'd make 20 dollars. That was my money. And see, when I was living on the farm, the man who owned this—it was sharecropping—he was only giving us seven dollars a week for my daddy to live out of and feed his family...seven dollars had to buy corn, had to buy meat, and whatever you were going to buy to eat for the whole week.

So, we had a crop every year turned over. Okay, the crop was split into more or less, three pieces. You got to pay for the use of the means of trying to cultivate your land. The white man's got his half. Out of your portion now, you've got to split again for the cost of working the land, you know. People don't work the land free. You got to pay the tractor driver two or three dollars a day. They go and figure out all of that. All that subtracted from your income, when you grow the crop and cultivate it. And if you hire anybody to pick any cotton, shake peanuts, or put it back on the stack—cause they got

peanut stacks—and you can hire anybody to do it, you got to pay like twenty or thirty cents a stack.

And so, by the end of the year, you may clear five or six hundred dollars. But before it comes to that, the Man's going to figure his half, he's going to figure your half. The Man, the boss man, the one in charge of the farm. So he's going to estimate it. He owns all the land. What you own is sharecropping. And everything comes out with—he's getting rich off you. You're getting poor over him 'cause he ain't paying you what he should be paying.

Bobbie Lee Hart

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
school	school (one syllable)	
thinking	think-ing (2 syllables)	
probably	prob-ab-ly (3 syllables)	
education	ed-u-ca-tion (4 syllables)	
estimate	es-tim-ate (3 syllables)	
peanuts	pean-uts (2 syllables)	

Questions

1. What made it difficult for Bobbie to go to school when he was a kid?
2. What was sharecropping? Who controls the land?
3. What did Bobbie think of sharecropping?
4. Do you think that later in his life Bobbie stayed on the farm or went to work elsewhere? What do you base this on?

Lesson Five

Raising Our Own Food

Back then they didn't pay us anything. They just work you hard, but they didn't pay you nothing. I don't know how we survived. But like blackberry time, we used to go pick blackberries. Some days we sold all of them, some days we didn't. If you didn't, Mama always cooked a big pot of blackberry dooby—now they call it blackberry cobbler. She would cook that, and she would cook peach dooby, too. She knew how to stretch things. We used to raise our potatoes, and she'd cook a big pot of potatoes and fry some meat, and some bread, and everybody was full. Nobody could tell what you had in your stomach once the eating was through.

And we didn't have steak and pork chops—you know, fresh stuff—every day. That was your weekend stuff. Fish was very cheap then, five cents a mullet. And we have fish on Friday. Mama would buy a quarter worth, and that'd be enough for Friday night and Saturday morning too. Saturday they'd go to town and they'd buy stew beef. They didn't have to buy chickens. And most time we raised hogs, but it would run out, then we'd have to go to the white folks and get it.

And we had a smoke house, and they used to stuff their own sausages. And it was good, too, 'cause they used to hang them up and let them drip and get all that grease out of them. They were very good. And they would cure the meat with the salt and then take it out and wash it, then hag it up, put pine tops and stuff underneath it and smoke it.

We growed vegetables: collard greens, butter beans, English peas and all that kind of stuff. See that was the problem, you raised most of your stuff that you eat, you didn't go to the store. Stew beef and steak, stuff like that, you had to buy. Some people down there, they used to kill their own cow. But we didn't, we just had a cow for our milk and butter. And we used to churn it; you seen those churned? Yeah, and that would be some good butter. So we ate pretty good.

Inez Williams

Word	Syllables	Write sentence
anything	an-y-thing (3 syllables)	
survived	sur-vived (2 syllables)	
always	al-ways (2 syllables)	
potatoes	po-ta-toes (3 syllables)	
everybody	ev-er-y-bo-dy (5 syllables)	
stomach	stom-ach (2 syllables)	

Questions

1. How did Inez's mother make things stretch?
2. How well do you think Inez and her family ate?
3. What did her weekly diet consist of? How healthy do you think it was?
4. How would you compare her diet with yours and your family's?
5. What image of Inez's childhood comes to mind while reading this passage?
6. What differences or similarities are there between what you read of Inez and your childhood?

Lesson 6

Growing Up Unloved

I was born in 1932 in Patton, Georgia and raised there. My parents were born and raised right here too as far as I can remember. My first memory about Patton, Georgia? Oh, that's pretty hard. It was just like a few minutes, until I got big enough that I was on my own. All I knew was just Patton, Georgia. I come up, come up, I come on up. Boy, did you ever have no one to care for? I didn't have nobody I could love, I didn't have nobody who could care something for me. I was just there. I had father and mamma, and grandmama, but they didn't have love.

I had brothers and sisters, I got one brother and one sister whole. Then my mom married again, I got eight half brothers and sisters. My father, he was mean to me. My stepmother, she was mean to me. She would tell lies on me, you know, make him whup me and all like that.

My father worked outside, he used to farm, he was a good farmer. He was a sharecropper. He got a bale of cotton, you go sell it and split it down the middle. My mother and father pretty much had the clothes on their back. You know, the little money they got on the side, they bought a little on the side, here and there. They moved around, you know, stay there two or three years, and move around.

When my mama and my dad separated? Oh, I don't know. I could not identify that 'cause I was too small, to young to remember that. I don't know, I was about seven or eight, I guess. I was strong when they separated. He remarried another woman. My mamma remarried when I was eight or nine, somewhere along in there. Her husband was more like a restaurant person. Just like it is up here: bacon, grits, sausage, and toast. It was sort of successful, 50/50.

He treat me mean. He didn't want me to play with his kids, he didn't want me to play with his other kids. My mama had three more kids by

him. He died. That was way back. I was too young to know just when he died. Somewhere along in there, eleven or twelve.

I'll tell you just about as much as I can remember. You see, my mama married again. He didn't want me to come to his house. I must have been about eighteen or nineteen years old when I left. So I left there and moved and didn't go back. I stayed in the woods, found a big old log. I cleaned the log out to make sure there was nothing in it. After I got through cleaning out the big log, I built me a big old campfire, then I turned around and wrapped myself up in a blanket. And now I can hear things coming up on me. So I stayed in there long until about daylight. Then I went down to see what they have, to get me something hot to drink. It didn't make no difference at that time: brew, home beer, liquor, wine, I didn't care. All I wanted was the feeling out of me.

Walter Mathis

Word	Syllable	Write Sentence
enough	e-nough (2 syllables)	
separated	sep-a-ra-ted (4 syllables)	
identify	i-den-ti-fy (4 syllables)	
remarried	re-marr-ied (3 syllables)	
restaurant	res-taur-ant (3 syllables)	
sausage	saus-age (2 syllables)	
bacon	ba-con (2 syllables)	
remember	re-mem-ber (2 syllables)	

Questions

1. What does Walter remember about Patton, Georgia?
2. Why don't you think there was love in Walter's family when he was growing up? What might have been going on with his parents?
3. What was Walter's stepfather like? What did he think of Walter?
4. What was it like for Walter when he slept in the log at night? What did he experience?
5. What do you think he was experiencing about himself?
6. If you could talk to Walter now, what would you like to say?

Lesson Seven Abused

I had problems growing up. When I was an adolescent I was living with my grandfather. You could say he raised me up. I remember good times with my granddaddy. He would tell me to go make up the bed. I went and balled up the sheets and blankets and put them in the middle of the bed. Then I would call granddaddy and say, "look daddy, I made the bed." He would come and see and say, "good job."

One time I recall myself mopping the floor with a dry mop. Grandmom was very sick so I gave her a drink of water. I made a mistake. I got her hot water instead of cold.

My grades in school were good, but they got worse. The teacher noticed. So she pulled me aside and asked what was going on. So I told her my family was hurting me.

Living with my mother was a bad move. She had a boyfriend. He molested me when I was little and raped me as a teenager. He would come to my room at night several times. My mom did not know this until my teacher told her what was going on. My mother did not believe what she was hearing, until I got pregnant.

This went on with other family members. Cousins, husbands, aunts' boyfriends. It seemed they kept it in the family so to speak.

Well, I had Timothy, my first child. He was a product of when my mother's boyfriend raped me. I was fifteen years old at the time. I stopped living with my mother. I went from family to family. It was hard living with my family because they would make me clean, cook, and take care of the kids. They would not even buy my son any Christmas toys, no birthday gifts. They would take all my money and buy gifts for their kids.

One day I got ill and had to go to the hospital. My mother was ill, too. She wasn't taking good care of my son. So my wicked aunt called the DCYS on my mother and they took my Timothy away when he was two years old. I didn't hear from him until he was nineteen. I prayed everyday that I would find him. My prayers were answered. Then he was taken away again.

This time the Lord took him away. He was murdered in restraints. My granddaddy was the only one in my family who I loved. He always helped me when I needed someone. But now he has gone too. I wanted to share with you my speech at my son's wake. It went like this:

I barely knew my son because he was adopted. However, there are things I want to share with you about him. My fiancé accepted him as his own offspring. My son accomplished many of his goals that he set out to achieve. He finished high school. He told many jokes. He was giving and kind and had a good heart and soul. He always had respect for me, calling me mom, and he respected his elders. I was happy to get to know him before he passed away. He will always be my heart. May God be with you all and also with my son.

Laura

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
adolescent	ad-o-lesc-ent (4 syllables)	
mistake	mis-take (2 syllables)	
molested	mo-les-ted (3 syllables)	
several	sev-er-al (3 syllables)	
believe	be-lieve (2 syllables)	
pregnant	preg-nant (2 syllables)	
respect	re-spect (2 syllables)	

Questions

1. Was there anything Laura could have done about the abuse she received as a child and teenager?
2. What can or should anyone do in that situation?
3. Why do you think there were so many problems in Laura's family?
4. Why do you think Laura's grandfather was so different?
5. What do you think Laura's grandfather means to her now?
6. Is there someone in your life who has made a deep impact on you? What is or what was that person like?
7. If you could talk to Laura what would you like to say?

Lesson Eight

Our Blood is the Same

You know, they didn't like colored people. And they always said if you spoke out, you didn't have good sense. They always say I was crazy because whatever I thought I spoke out.

I can't describe how it makes you feel. But growing up that way, for a long time, you didn't know no better. But when you're living in these people's houses and that is the way it is, you just have to follow by their rules. Just makes you ill. Feel like your less than a human being.

Anytime something come up and my mother around, I wouldn't say nothing. But sometime it would come out like a Philco [an old radio]. One time the police was beating up a colored man, slapping him all like that. And I said to him, "You was fighting your wife. Now the police are hitting you and you ain't even hitting back or even saying nothing." Mama said, "Hush, baby, hush." Telling me to hush 'cause she thought they were going to say something.

You wonder, what kind of heart did the peoples have? And why they thought we was so much different. And I look at some people act different now. But it doesn't bother me 'cause if they don't want to say nothing to me I won't say nothing to them. But like the lady on television said, "What's so great about you whites?" And you're not really white and we're not really black. And if I cut you or you cut me and put our blood together, you wouldn't tell one from the other.

Inez

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
describe	de-scribe (2 syllables)	
fighting	fight-ing (2 syllables)	
people	peo-ple (2 syllables)	
different	dif-fer-ent (3 syllables)	
television	tel-e-vis-ion (4 syllables)	

Questions

1. Why do you think so many people didn't like black people in the South during the time Inez was growing up in the 1930s and 1940s?
2. Why were the police beating up on the black man? Do you think that was just?
3. Why did Inez's mother tell her to "hush" when she spoke out at the man who was being beat up?
4. Why didn't Inez blame the police instead?
5. What does Inez think about the way the races treated each other when she was growing up?
6. What does she think would be a better way?
7. Do you think race relations between blacks and whites have improved or not over the year?
8. In what ways do they still need to be improved?
9. What would you like people of different cultures and backgrounds to know about you and what would you like to know about people from different cultures and backgrounds?

Lesson Nine

Growing Up

This is a book about my life. My name is Willie Jones (not his real name). I was born in 1952 in Greensboro, North Carolina, to a lady named Rosie-Jane Lee F. I don't remember too much about my early childhood but my aunt and uncle talk of those times; how I cried a lot at night, how my grandmother carried me everywhere with her and how I was a telltale! Life I think was okay. My mother was living in Raleigh, NC, married to a man named Johnny-Bob (all names made up). One day, I was told, my mom was upset with her mother, so to hurt her she took me back to live with my new family. I met my new sister and my new daddy. Little did I know pain was about to be an everyday part of my life. See my parents were alcoholics and in my new home I saw a lot of hate but no love. I learnt how to be dishonest and the feeling of not being wanted. The beatings I got were uncalled for. As I got older my attitude became worse and worse at home. Mom and step-pop would just drink and fight and she had boyfriends on the outside. She would take food from home to them, I would tell my step-pop and they would fight about it, then I would get a beating.

My school life was no better. From the first grade up, I was always picked on. At that time there was no busing to a school in another part of town, so we walked to school. The kids were from my neighborhood so they knew what was going on in my home, so I was picked on and called names at school. Also, I was a big crybaby and kids would take my lunch money. Some of the girls would beat on me. I started work at an early age, about 12, so I wouldn't be at home. I hated school. I did just enough to get by and pass to the next grade. My outside life was just as bad—black hated white, and white hated black. I was a child who was feeling a lot of hate, and I wanted to share my life through the eyes of hate. As a teenager I hated the fact that I was born, I didn't like my home or school. But with all that hate, I still had a drive in me. The drive was that I be someone one day. People would look up to me. I had a few friends, about four. I

was afraid of women. I had no girlfriend in school. My friend had a little girl. All I heard were bad names about me like big lip. I was called ugly in junior high. My mom would call me names. Senior high was no better. I did two grades over, 11th and 12th. I was in high school five years. But that drive I had would not let me drop out. Where did I get that drive?

Well lets go back some. Mom would have a good time on the weekends, but come Monday morning she would say, "I get drunk my house get drunk. She would keep me out of school to clean the house back up. She would always brag what my two sisters was going to be in school and life. My step-pop's people would come visit us. They would always give my sisters money, but not me. My granddaddy were the only person that would come to visit us that would make me feel part of a family, and stopped my mom's beating, yelling or calling me names.

As time went on my granddaddy passed. My first experience with death, and it was during the 60s when you kept the body in the home. It was for one or two days, and no in the family took the time to explain to me about death. So I cried and cried the two days his body was in the house. I hoped my granddaddy would sit up and hug me, but he never did. I left home with more hate. A big hole in my heart of being alone. So my granddaddy was buried. We went back to Raleigh. Life was the same and I had no one to protect me from my mom's abuse. My step-pop got tired of life with his wife, so he left her and us. Now that's three men in my life who left pain of hate in my heart. So the first one was my real father who I find out did not want me at birth. My granddaddy, now my step-pop, and the hate I had for my real father was to kill him on sight. See I was very angry with him for a lot of my teen years. I would call my mom names like ["hoe"] because she could not tell me who my daddy was. Things at this time was so bad, no one gave a damn in my house. My grades was so poor in the 8th grade it was all F's the whole year. What did the school system do for an 8th grader whose report cards was F? They put me in special ed., and did not take time to see what the real problem was. At this time

home life was like being in the street; me and mom were fighting. She would come in drunk and take money from me. I had been cut by her a few times. My hate was the size of New York.

Larry

Word	Syllables	Write sentence
dishonest	dis-hon-est (3 syllables)	
beatings	beat-ings (2 syllables)	
alcoholic	al-co-hol-ic (4 syllables)	
outside	out-side (2 syllables)	
neighborhood	neigh-bor-hood (3 syllables)	
enough	e-nough (2 syllables)	
angry	an-gry (2 syllables)	

Questions

1. Who did Willie first live with as a young child? What happened?
2. What pain in his family did he experience while growing up?
3. How do you think that affected him?
4. What was Willie's experience at school?
5. What did Willie say about race relationships between blacks and whites in North Carolina?
6. What did Willie experience when his grandfather died? Why was his death such a traumatic experience for him?
7. Why were things between Willie and his mother extremely bad?

Lesson Ten

The Trip to Hell

Friends

I had two friends and the reason we were friends was because we were in the same boat. Our mothers were somewhat alike. I can remember when I was 16, Billy was 15 and Johnny was 17. We ran away from home. Our plan was to get a job. The city we picked was Washington, D.C. Our plan was great but we left on the wrong day, a Friday. Our bus ticket was \$9.35 and I think when I bought my ticket I was left with \$15.00 in my pocket. I was afraid on the bus ride to D.C., and I heard a song on the bus called "Reach Out and Touch Someone's Hand." Little did I know that song would mean something to me on the third and fourth night we were in D.C. We got there at 5:00 p.m., Friday. We put our luggage in a locker, and walked around for a few hours. As night started to set in, the nightmare started; you could not rest in the bus station on Pennsylvania Avenue and the Treasury Department on 14th Street.

Then we went back to the bus; as we were standing in the bus station a man came up to us and said, "you're from out of town." We said, "yes." The conversation started. He talked like he was an okay person. He knew Raleigh because he named some place there. We told our story; oh yes, his name was Lewis. He said to us, "you can all stay the night at my place." He lived on the outer part of D.C. We got to his house; I was drinking at this point in my life, so us, or he fixed us a few drinks. Lewis said it was about time for bed. Little did I know he was bi-sexual; he liked men to do him. We put our nightwear on and he liked Johnny polka-dot nightwear. He and Johnny had the same bed. The light went off, and about 10 minutes later heard a voice saying, "Man, stop now!" It was Johnny telling him to stop blowing in his ear, and Lewis got mad and told Johnny to get out of the bed, and said, "Tony, you or you people come over here." We said, "oh, no!" So he got mad and put us out. That was early Saturday morning. We took a taxi back

to the station. Our money was low now, we had a small breakfast and we ate candy to keep us from being too hungry. We walked some more until Sunday evening. I had two things on my mind, life was miserable at home and it was hell here, so I went and got my luggage and I asked the first person I saw, "How do you get back to North Carolina?"

The Trip Home

The white guy I asked told me 14th Street would take me to Virginia. I started to walk and about 30 minutes I heard my two friends shout out, "wait for us." So we started walking together. As we were heading to Virginia Beach, we were walking on a rail bridge over water; and what came our way? A fast moving train! So we had to stand on the edge of the of the railway tile, and I was very afraid because I cannot swim, so it was a moment of pure fear. But we escaped without being hurt. As we continued our walk we did get rides from people off and on. Night was about to fall; we had no money for food. I remember we spend the night in a junkyard for cars, and we went to sleep in an old car. The next morning when we awoke we saw that next to the junkyard was a restaurant, the bacon and eggs were all I could smell in the air. Our last meal was on Saturday and we were eating candy to keep us from being too hungry. I got rid of some of my luggage on the way to lighten my load. A few miles out of South Hill, Virginia a truck stopped for us and he was going all the way to North Carolina, so he let us ride with him, and about four hours later we were in Raleigh. When I got out of the truck I kissed the ground because I was so glad to be back from hell and back to my miserable life at home. We had been away for five days. We walked to our homes in the project. Johnny's sister cooked us a big pot of beans and corn bread, but at my house my mother didn't notice the fact that I had been gone for five days; so you could see the love that my home had, and the school didn't care either, because when I went back the next day, no one asked me where I'd been. But it was good to be back, because that was a trip from hell.

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
reason	rea-son (2 syllables)	
luggage	lug-gage (2 syllables)	
hungry	hung-ry (2 syllables)	
escaped	es-caped (2 syllables)	
restaurant	rest-aur-ant (3 syllables)	
miserable	mis-er-a-ble (4 syllables)	
because	be-cause (2 syllables)	

Questions

1. Why did Willie run away?
2. What happened to them in Washington, D.C.?
3. Why did Willie and his friends want to go home?
4. What did Larry do when he got back to Raleigh?
5. How was he greeted by his family when he returned home?
6. Do you think Willie was changed in any way by the trip?
7. What do you think Willie learned from the trip?
8. In what ways do you think he was still the same person?
9. In what ways do you think he changed?

**Voices Urban America
George Demetrion (Editor)
Manager of Community-Based Programming
Literacy Volunteers of Greater Hartford**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Lesson One

Lesson Two

Lesson Three

Lesson Four

Lesson Five

Lesson Six

Lesson Seven

Lesson Eight

Lesson Nine

Lesson Ten

Voices Urban America
George Demetrion (Editor)
Manager of Community-Based Programming
Literacy Volunteers of Greater Hartford

My favorite place in Hartford is Elizabeth Park, especially in spring and summer, because at those times the flowers begin to bud. It looks like a magic world of color.

Elizabeth Park is a very peaceful place, where you hear the wind when it moves the leaves, and the birds when they are singing. This park has a lot of trees and flowers, such as carnations, violets, and daffodils. The smell of the flowers and the trees is like many perfumes put together.

I usually go to my favorite place when I want to be relaxed, or when I have problems and I cannot solve them. The only thing I do is go there and look for some place where I can sit. Then I begin to reflect by myself and I fix my thoughts to get the best situation.

Zaida

Sure, I had experiences before where things didn't work out. But I've never been a quitter. All my life I've been a fighter. It's true. It's been hard for me. It's not easy. The good thing is I'm a woman that always leaves the door open every place I go. I went and worked for two factories; and I prayed to God, that I'm so wonderful at working that both doors are still open for me. Anytime I want to go back, they will hire me. I'm always like that, too. If I work here, I want to do my job right. I'm always like that.

Maria

Lesson One

Class Clown

I come from a neighborhood where people you see fighting every day, you see 'em getting shot every day, you see 'em getting killed every day. I was growed up in that kind of environment. So all I really know is like hardcore things. I watched a lot of drugs being sold around me. I watched my friends and family sell drugs and have big cars and stuff like that. I always wanted to, like, emulate them, because I felt like they was something at the time. So they took away from my school work. They made me feel like it was more important. . . like, well, how did they be getting them big cars and stuff like money, pocket full of money, everything at my fingertips.

I lived in Belleview Square, Building Seven, Belleview Square. It was a place where, like hardcore kids come out of. If you come out of Belleview Square then education wasn't too much for too many people. Lot of people was, like I said, they was trying to sell drugs or they were being comedians like I was. You have a lot of people that come out of Belleview Square that have survived that made it big. You got a lot of them that didn't. I'm one of the ones that didn't, but I'm still trying. I think what got in the way of me studying is I'm too easy distracted. You have people easily get my attention and I, like, follow along. In other words, I go do what they do.

During my time was a lot of riots, a lot of racial stuff, that was going on. You had all these gang members and everybody trying to join gangs and, you know, tearing up our old neighborhoods and stuff like this. As I started to get older, I started realizing that that wasn't it, okay? Going to jail, back and forth all the time, and stuff like that. I started realizing that the way to go, the way, the right way, was get a job, try to help yourself, if you have a family, try to help your family, try to get up on your feet and try to do the right thing. Selling drugs, being bad, trying to be cool, trying to be tough. That doesn't make it in our lives today.

You need common sense in order to make it, in order to survive today. Common sense just come to you, but so many of us ignore the common sense that we have. We don't pay more attention to it, to be able to release ourselves from the pressure and all the anxieties and stuff that people normally have throughout their lives. We kind of let that pressure affect us in a way, to the point that it makes us very angry inside, very angry to the point that you might want to hurt somebody, you might want to hurt yourself.

Keith

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
neighborhood	neigh-bor-hood (3 syllables)	
emulate	em-ulate (3 syllables)	
comedian	co-me-di-an (4 syllables)	
distracted	dis-trac-ted (3 syllables)	
attention	a-tten-tion (3 syllables)	
environment	en-vi-ro-ment (4 syllables)	
pressure	pre-ssure (2 syllables)	
throughout	through-out (2 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

I come from a _____ where people you see fighting every day, you see 'em getting shot every day, you see 'em getting killed every day. I was growed up in that kind of _____. So all I really know is like hardcore things. I watched a lot of drugs being sold around me. I watched my friends and family sell drugs and have big _____ and stuff like that. I always wanted to, like, emulate them, because I felt like they was something at the time. So they took away from my _____ work. They made me feel like it was more important. . . like, well, how did they be getting them big cars and stuff like money, pocket full of money, everything at my fingertips.

I lived in Belleview Square, Building Seven, Belleview Square. It was a place where _____ kids come out of. If you come out of Belleview Square then education wasn't too much for too many people. Lot of people was, like I said, they was trying to sell drugs or they were being comedians like I was. You have a lot of _____ that come out of Belleview Square that have survived that made it big. You got a lot of them that didn't. I'm one of the ones that didn't, but I'm still trying. I think what got in the way of me _____ is I'm too easy _____. You have people easily get my attention and I, like, follow along. In other words, I go do what they do.

During my time was a lot of riots, a lot of _____ stuff, that was going on. You had all these gang members and everybody trying to join gangs and, you know, tearing up our old neighborhoods and stuff like this. As I started to get older, I started _____ that that wasn't it, okay? Going to jail, back and forth all the time, and stuff like that. I started realizing that the way to go, the way, the right way, was get a job, try to help yourself, if you have a family, try to help your family, try to get up on your _____ and try to do the right thing. Selling drugs, being bad, trying to be cool, trying to be _____. That doesn't make it in our _____ today.

You need common _____ in order to make it, in order to survive today. Common sense just come to you, but so many of us _____ the common sense that we have. We don't pay more attention to it, to be able to release ourselves from the _____ and all the anxieties and stuff that people normally have throughout their lives. We kind of let that pressure affect us in a way, to the point that it makes us very _____ inside, very angry to the point that you might want to hurt somebody, you might want to hurt yourself.

Questions

1. Describe how Keith grew up.
2. What was school like for him?
3. What was he trying to emulate? Why?
4. What resources do teens and families have to counteract negative influences of the street?
5. What impact do you think Keith's school experiences had on his life as an adult?
6. If you were to write a letter to Keith, what would you say?

Lesson Two

Holding Up the Corner

Very dangerous area, you might hear it on the news. We get the most crime, highest crime rate there. Not that I'm proud of it either. I've been shot out there, I've been stabbed out there, I've been beat up out there, you know, I've been through my drugs.

Basically I drank until I found out about reefer, and I went to reefer. I didn't care for it, I went to glue, I went to TAC. I was your basic garbage head. Anything you had, I tried. I was coming up on the age of fourteen, fifteen.

The people I hung out with was always older. I always hung out with older people because they were more mature and seemed like they had something I wanted. Most of 'em were dope fiends. I admired a dope fiend. Dope fiend is not a dope fiend. Because they were slick, they were slick dressing, they had a lot of talk, they had a lot of game, and they always seemed to have the money flowing. But the money was never staying in one hand, it was always coming out of their hand to another hand. I always thought it was their money but it wasn't. It was all about the drugs and how they got the drugs to use people like me to come into the game new.

Every day the dope fiend had to have new prey. Just like the wild, they have to have a prey, something they could live off of. So the dope fiend lived off other human beings. And I became one of them dope fiends, because I became one of them prey that lived or used other people for whatever I can get out of 'em. It wasn't what I can give you, it was what I can get out of you 'cause I had no kind of hustle. I couldn't work.

I sold drugs. I started running drugs for people. Running sales to and from cars. "Hey he wants two bags," and I would run it to him. And I found out when I do this, the drug addict gives me drugs. So now I

didn't have to pay for drugs, all I had to do was scrape up a little money to get something to eat. Some guys they let you run the drugs, too. They had a little more money, would give you a little something for yourself. If you were ever out there on the streets, you know that the guy was okay with you. You come to the block you could give him twenty-five dollars, and he'd give you twenty-five dollars worth of merchandise. You say, this guy's all right, he's trustworthy. I'm gonna throw him a little something, so next time I come back I can trust him again with my money 'cause you can't trust anybody with your money. Because when I was out there, you put your money in my hand and I didn't know you and you're all the way around the corner, there was a good chance I wasn't coming back. But the people that trusted me gave me their money. And I beat some pretty tough people out there. I ripped off some people that I knew would basically hurt me. I ripped off people that did hurt me.

This was back in the sixties now. You're talking about peace, love, and Jimi Hendrix. I was a kid. I remember being a Black Panther, but selling papers for the Muslims. Wanting to be a Muslim, wanting to be a Black Panther because they represented power. I wanted to get in on all these things, but I really didn't. I just wanted to be part of something and I didn't care what it was. I sold buttons. I sold posters. Hung around with the hippies, with the long hair and the pipes. And I used to go to their house and crash out with them. I'm a young kid, hanging out. They digged me. I was comical. I was in. I'd do crazy shit.

At that time, I was already engaged in drinking, you know, smoking cigarettes and cigars, and beer. I'm really into the crowd scene. I learned to just use people for my personal use. I thought I was doing the manipulating when I was being manipulated. 'Cause I didn't have a good head on my shoulders but I did know right from wrong so I didn't do anything stupid or violent.

I started drinking so I didn't have to feel these things because I started feeling pain, things, the denials that I had. I stuffed 'em by drinking. I drank a lot. I hung out on the streets. I started off with the beer and the cigars. Then it went to glue, and went to pills with the Quaaludes. Then it went to TAC, horse tranquilizer, it went to sniffing cocaine, it went to sniffing heroine. The crowd was older. Nobody says they want to get you hooked, but then they find out if you're gonna pay for it two to three months. . .then I started snorting, popping with needles, then I started main-lining it.

I was living with my mother, but I was running the streets and I stayed at friends' houses, I stayed at anybody's house I could. I ate what I could when I could. I was stealing, that's when my stealing spree was. Anything and everything. I'd steal just to support my habit. I'd steal to take care of other people's habits. I did a lot of crazy things under the influence of drugs. Alcohol gave me the courage. . .the drug gave me the feeling I looked for and the alcohol gave me the courage to get the money to support it. They'd say, "Listen Mike, we want you to break in this joint here." And I would go do it because it was my thing anyway. A lot of 'em *didn't know I was getting high off of heroin. It was heroin that was the closest. But, today, people don't care. "I'm a heroin user, exchange these needles for these needles." If it's gonna help, fine. But if it's gonna hurt, why, you know, why should you? If it'll stop the spread of the virus, so be it. Because if the people are willing to come and stand in line to get 'em, at least they're willing to exchange them.

They can send a man to the moon, they can send satellites to the moon, but they can't stop the flow of drugs to this country. It took money to send men to the moon, and it takes [money to get] rid of drugs in this country. Drugs is money and money is power. And without question, with money, you can do anything. But, now, today, I believe that with education you can do more. Because the people that are behind the drugs and the money are very educated. I don't put blame because I don't know where blame belongs. But it's all about the money.

Michael

Word	Syllable	Write Sentence
dangerous	dang-er-ous (3 syllables)	
highest	high-est (2 syllables)	
admire	ad-mire (2 syllables)	
addict	ad-dict (2 syllables)	
merchandise	mer-cha-n-dise (3 syllables)	
cocaine	co-caine (2 syllables)	
stealing	steal-ing (2 syllables)	
exchange	ex-change (2 syllables)	
heroin	her-o-in (3 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

Very _____ area, you might hear it on the news. We get the most crime, highest crime rate there. Not that I'm proud of it either. I've been shot out there, I've been _____ out there, I've been beat up out there, you know, I've been through my drugs.

Basically I drank until I found out about reefer, and I went to reefer. I didn't care for it, I went to glue, I went to TAC. I was your basic _____ head. Anything you had, I tried. I was coming up on the age of fourteen, fifteen.

The people I hung out with was always older. I always hung out with _____ people because they were more mature and seemed like they had something I wanted. Most of 'em were dope fiends. I _____ a dope fiend. Dope fiend is not a dope fiend. Because they were slick, they were slick dressing, they had a lot of talk, they had a lot of game, and they always seemed to have the money flowing. But the money was never staying in one hand, it was always coming out of their hand to _____ hand. I always thought it was their money but it wasn't. It was all about the drugs and how they got the drugs to use people like me to come into the game new.

Every day the dope fiend had to have new _____. Just like the wild, they have to have a prey, something they could live off of. So the dope fiend lived off other human beings. And I became one of them _____ fiends, because I became one of them prey that lived or used other people for whatever I can get out of 'em. It wasn't what I can give you, it was what I can get out of you 'cause I had no kind of hustle. I couldn't work.

I sold drugs. I started running _____ for people. Running sales to and from cars. "Hey he wants two bags," and I would run it to him. And I found out when I do this, the drug addict gives me drugs. So now I didn't have to pay for drugs, all I had to do was scrape up a little money to get something to eat. Some guys they let you run the drugs, too. They had a little more _____, would give you a little something for yourself. If you were ever out there on the streets, you know that the guy was okay with you. You come to the block you could give him twenty-five dollars, and he'd give you twenty-five dollars worth of merchandise. You say, this guy's all right, he's trustworthy. I'm gonna throw him a little something, so next time I come back I can _____ him again with my money 'cause you can't trust anybody with your money. Because when I was out there, you put your _____ in my hand and I didn't know you and you're all the way around the corner, there was a good chance I wasn't coming back. But the people

that trusted me gave me their money. And I _____ some pretty tough people out there. I ripped off some people that I knew would basically hurt me. I ripped off people that did hurt me.

This was back in the sixties now. You're talking about peace, _____, and Jimi Hendrix. I was a kid. I remember being a Black Panther, but selling papers for the Muslims. Wanting to be a Muslim, wanting to be a Black Panther because they represented power. I wanted to get in on all these things, but I really didn't. I just wanted to be part of something and I didn't care what it was. I sold buttons. I sold posters. Hung around with the hippies, with the long hair and the pipes. And I used to go to their house and crash out with them. I'm a young kid, _____ out. They digged me. I was _____. I was in. I'd do crazy shit.

At that time, I was already engaged in drinking, you know, _____ cigarettes and cigars, and beer. I'm really into the crowd scene. I learned to just use people for my _____ use. I thought I was doing the manipulating when I was being manipulated. 'Cause I didn't have a good head on my shoulders but I did know right from wrong so I didn't do anything stupid or violent.

I started drinking so I didn't have to feel these things because I started feeling pain, things, the denials that I had. I stuffed 'em by drinking. I drank a lot. I hung out on the streets. I started off with the beer and the cigars. Then it went to glue, and went to pills with the Quaaludes. Then it went to TAC, horse tranquilizer, it went to sniffing cocaine, it went to sniffing heroine. The crowd was older. Nobody says they want to get you _____, but then they find out if you're gonna pay for it two to three months. . .then I started snorting, popping with needles, then I started main-lining it.

I was living with my mother, but I was running the streets and I _____ at friends' houses, I stayed at anybody's house I could. I ate what I could when I could. I was stealing, that's when my stealing spree was. Anything and everything. I'd steal just to _____ my

habit. I'd steal to take care of other people's habits. I did a lot of crazy things under the influence of drugs. _____ gave me the courage. . .the drug gave me the feeling I looked for and the alcohol gave me the courage to get the money to support it. They'd say, "Listen Mike, we want you to break in this joint here." And I would go do it because it was my thing anyway. A lot of 'em didn't know I was getting _____ off of heroin. It was heroin that was the closest. But, today, people don't care. "I'm a heroin user, _____ these needles for these needles." If it's gonna help, fine. But if it's gonna hurt, why, you know, why should you? If it'll stop the spread of the virus, so be it. Because if the people are willing to come and stand in line to get 'em, at least they're willing to exchange them.

They can send a man to the _____, they can send satellites to the moon, but they can't stop the flow of drugs to this country. It took money to send men to the moon, and it takes [money to get] rid of drugs in this country. Drugs is money and money is _____. And without question, with money, you can do anything. But, now, today, I believe that with _____ you can do more. Because the people that are behind the drugs and the money are very educated. I don't put blame because I don't know where _____ belongs. But it's all about the _____.

Questions

1. How would you compare Michael and Keith's situation as they grew up?
2. Where do you think Michael's parents were?
3. When Michael says drugs are all about the money, what do you think he means?
4. What would it take someone in Michael's situation to straighten his life out?
5. Where would he get support? In which ways would he need to depend on himself?

Lesson Three

Moving Here and There

I went to school for two years in Puerto Rico. I started here in the third grade. Back then in first grade, I wasn't doing too good in school. I remember the teacher told my mother that. The teacher said my mother needed to get involved with me because I wasn't doing too good. I was doing pretty bad.

My mother didn't do too much about it. She had a problem with schooling, herself. It was a tough time. But I made it to second grade. I still wasn't paying attention, and I wasn't getting my work done. My mother mentioned it to me but that was about it.

When I first came here to Hartford, I went to school in the North End. We went there for a couple of months. Then we went to another school in Charter Oak. Then from there I went to Hooker School for maybe another year. Then we moved again, and I went to another school down on Washington Street. That school has been converted to an elderly home. They remodeled it and they've got people living in it.

Then I went to this other school, Burns School on Putnam Street. I went there for two years, I think, for fifth and sixth grades.

In the early days in first, second, and third grades, there weren't any subjects. Later on I got into math. I liked doing it because I was able to comprehend it better than anything else. Science, I did a little bit of that. It was interesting. I liked history. Music was good, I got involved. I played the trumpet for a while. That was in the sixth grade, I think. I didn't get too far with it. We ended up moving to another place.

My teachers were pretty good but, some of them, they just didn't know how to detect the kids' problems. They got so many kids in the classroom half of the time, it's hard for them to concentrate on one

kid. What happened to me, I can't hold that against them. They're doing the job the best they can.

When we moved, I went to another school for seventh and eighth grades. I graduated from there. They gave me a diploma. They really gave me nothing at that time. It was the last day of school, and I just looked at the diploma. They really gave me nothing at that time. It was the last day of school, and I just looked at the diploma and went by this trash can and threw it in. It didn't mean nothing to me.

From Hartford, we moved to Bridgeport and I was going to start high school there in, maybe, one to two weeks. I wasn't ready to go to high school. I didn't know how to read or write. I don't even know how I made it to eighth grade! My mother had moved around a lot. I was in a different school every other six months and that messed me up a bit.

I believe I wasn't learning because I needed special attention. I was afraid to let the kids know I couldn't read. School wasn't important by the time I was twelve or thirteen years old. When I was in seventh grade, I started to see things more clearly. But it was too late. I thought I was just a normal kid having a hard time. But, between sixth and seventh grade, I realized I had a problem.

I can remember in fourth grade that I was learning to read. The first word I remember is "street." I guess half of the time I had a problem. I didn't see it as fun. Coming to America and learning a new language made it difficult for me. But my brothers and sisters lived in the same house I did. They had some problems too, but they were able to comprehend reading.

I never went through high school because I wasn't learning anything when I went to junior high. But, at the Hooker School, I was getting some reading help because, at that time, I was having problems. When I went there they put me in a special program, which was one-on-one,

to teach me how to read. That was working out pretty good. I was in the fourth grade.

From there we moved and I went to Fox School. Basically, it was a good school. I had a good teacher, but I didn't get a chance to go one-on-one. So that was fourth and fifth grade.

Then, we moved, and at the next school, nothing happened, no one-on-one. The most that happened there was math. I was beginning to get good at it by the time I was in eighth grade. In seventh and eighth grade, everybody used to give me their homework in math. But, I became the class clown in a way because, by that time, school wasn't fun enough. I just wanted to interrupt the class. I became that kind of kid. I just wasn't learning nothing.

When I started going to high school, it was a new place with no friends. I told my mother I wasn't going to high school. She said I had to because I wasn't sixteen years old at the time. The law said I had to go to school. I cut classes here and there, and the year went by and I turned sixteen. I wanted to get a job or something.

I learned how to copy; but as far as really getting into it and participating, it was not there. I was distracted half the time. I didn't know there was any joy in learning. Now, I like to read about history. Then, it wasn't there.

Orlando

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
remember	re-mem-ber (3 syllables)	
attention	a-tten-tion (3 syllables)	
mention	men-tion (2 syllables)	
comprehend	com-pre- hend (3 syllables)	
classroom	class-room (2 syllables)	
diploma	di-plo-ma (3 syllables)	
different	dif-fer-ent (3 syllables)	
language	lang-uage (2 syllables)	
distracted	dis-tra-cted (3 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

I went to _____ for two years in Puerto Rico. I started here in the third grade. Back then in first grade, I wasn't doing too good in school. I remember the teacher told my _____ that. The teacher said my mother needed to get _____ with me because I wasn't doing too good. I was doing pretty bad.

My mother didn't do too much about it. She had a _____ with schooling, herself. It was a tough time. But I made it to second grade. I still wasn't paying attention, and I wasn't getting my work done. My mother mentioned it to me but that was about it.

When I first came here to Hartford, I went to school in the North End. We went there for a couple of _____. Then we went to another school in Charter Oak. Then from there I went to Hooker School for maybe another year. Then we _____ again, and I went to another school down on Washington Street. That school has been converted to an elderly home. They remodeled it and they've got people living in it.

Then I went to this other school, Burns School on Putnam Street. I went there for two years, I think, for fifth and sixth grades.

In the early days in first, second, and third grades, there weren't any subjects. Later on I got into math. I liked doing it because I was able to _____ it better than anything else. Science, I did a little bit of that. It was interesting. I liked history. Music was good, I got involved. I played the trumpet for a while. That was in the sixth grade, I think. I didn't get too far with it. We ended up _____ to another place.

My teachers were pretty good but, some of them, they just didn't know how to _____ the kids' problems. They got so many kids in the classroom half of the time, it's hard for them to _____ on one kid. What happened to me, I can't hold that against them. They're doing the job the best they can.

When we moved, I went to another school for seventh and eighth grades. I graduated from there. They gave me a diploma. They really gave me nothing at that time. It was the last day of school, and I just looked at the diploma. They really gave me _____ at that time. It was the last day of school, and I just looked at the diploma and went by this trash can and threw it in. It didn't mean nothing to me.

From Hartford, we moved to Bridgeport and I was going to start high school there in, maybe, one to two weeks. I wasn't ready to go to high

school. I didn't know how to _____ or write. I don't even know how I made it to eighth grade! My mother had moved around a lot. I was in a _____ school every other six months and that messed me up a bit.

I believe I wasn't learning because I needed _____ attention. I was afraid to let the kids know I couldn't read. School wasn't _____ by the time I was twelve or thirteen years old. When I was in seventh grade, I started to see things more clearly. But it was too late. I thought I was just a normal kid having a _____ time. But, between sixth and seventh grade, I _____ I had a problem.

I can _____ in fourth grade that I was learning to read. The first word I remember is "street." I guess half of the time I had a problem. I didn't see it as fun. Coming to America and learning a new _____ made it difficult for me. But my brothers and sisters lived in the same house I did. They had some problems too, but they were able to _____ reading.

I never went through high school because I wasn't learning anything when I went to junior high. But, at the Hooker School, I was getting some reading help because, at that time, I was having problems. When I went there they put me in a special _____, which was one-on-one, to teach me how to read. That was working out pretty good. I was in the fourth grade.

From there we moved and I went to Fox School. Basically, it was a good school. I had a good teacher, but I didn't get a chance to go one-on-one. So that was fourth and fifth grade.

Then, we moved, and at the next school, nothing happened, no one-on-one. The most that happened there was math. I was beginning to get good at it by the time I was in eighth grade. In seventh and eighth grade, everybody used to give me their homework in math. But, I

became the class _____ in a way because, by that time, school wasn't fun enough. I just wanted to _____ the class. I became that kind of kid. I just wasn't learning nothing.

When I started going to high school, it was a new place with no _____. I told my mother I wasn't going to high school. She said I had to because I wasn't sixteen years old at the time. The law said I had to go to _____. I cut classes here and there, and the year went by and I turned sixteen. I wanted to get a job or something.

I learned how to copy; but as far as really getting into it and participating, it was not there. I was _____ half the time. I didn't know there was any joy in learning. Now, I _____ to read about history. Then, it wasn't there.

Questions

1. What were the problems Orlando faced in school?
2. Why do you think his mother moved so often?
3. What, if anything, could the schools have done differently?
4. Was there anything about school that he did like?
5. What picture do you have of Orlando as a child?
6. If you were to write Orlando a letter, what would you like to say?

Lesson Four

Growing Up Rough

I used to go to Mary M. Hooker School, and I was doing great except my reading and writing wasn't very well. They knew that, but they kept passing me in school. Then I got up to New Park School. I was doing a little better...they took a little time as far as my reading and writing goes. Hooker School, that's up until you got into the 6th grade, and it was 7th to 8th grade in New Park. Then, I went to Bulkeley High School. That's when they started working with me, really. They had math, English, and science classes and stuff like that, they had a lot of study halls. But anyway, well, my English classes, I really enjoyed that because the lady really took time with me. Then, from there, well, I was sixteen and in 9th grade, and then I wasn't no longer interested in school, I was interested in boys. I didn't want nobody to know that I couldn't read or write. The teacher knew, I forgot her name, but anyway...she knew.

When they kept me back in the 9th grade, that really disappointed me. I got pregnant. I dropped out of school, and then after I dropped out of school, my father died. Then I just didn't care for a while. I started smokin' reefuh, hangin' out with the girls. I took care of my daughter but you know I was drinking liquor and stuff like that. Then after that, I moved in with my girlfriend. My mother told me that if I didn't slow down, then she was gonna take my daughter from me. I was living with my girlfriend at the time. I was staying with her, and a girl named Harriet. I was staying with her, and we used to skip together and buy liquor, and before that we used to cook for the kids and but liquor. I thought that was the thing to do...you know how you just want to grow up so fast. So, then after this, my mother threatened that if I don't shape up, she was gonna take my daughter from me.

So I moved back home. I went back home with my moms, and got myself together. I didn't want nobody to know that I couldn't read or

write, but the way I talked, anyone with common sense would know that I didn't have too much good schooling.

Brenda

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
except	ex-cept (2 syllables)	
passing	pas-sing (2 syllables)	
science	Sci-ence (2 syllables)	
teacher	teach-er (2 syllables)	
liquor	liq-uor (2 syllables)	
together	to-geth-er (3 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

I used to go to Mary M. Hooker School, and I was doing great _____ my reading and writing wasn't very well. They knew that, but they kept _____ me in school. Then I got up to New Park School. I was doing a little better...they took a little time as far as my reading and writing goes. Hooker School, that's up until you got into the 6th grade, and it was 7th to 8th grade in New Park. Then, I went to Bulkeley High School. That's when they started _____ with me, really. They had math, English, and science classes and stuff like that, they had a lot of study halls. But anyway, well, my English classes, I really _____ that because the lady really took time with me. Then, from there, well, I was sixteen and in 9th grade, and then I wasn't no longer _____ in school, I was interested in boys. I didn't want _____ to know that I couldn't read or write. The teacher knew, I forgot her name, but anyway...she knew.

When they kept me back in the 9th grade, that really _____ me. I got pregnant. I dropped out of school, and then after I dropped out of school, my father died. Then I just didn't care for a while. I started smokin' reefuh, hangin' out with the girls. I took care of my _____ but you know I was drinking liquor and stuff like that. Then after that, I moved in with my girlfriend. My mother told me that if I didn't slow down, then she was gonna take my daughter from me. I was living with my girlfriend at the time. I was staying with her, and a girl named Harriet. I was staying with her, and we used to _____ together and buy liquor, and before that we used to cook for the kids and but liquor. I thought that was the thing to do...you know how you just want to grow up so _____. So, then after this, my mother _____ that if I don't shape up, she was gonna take my daughter from me.

So I moved back _____. I went back home with my moms, and got myself together. I didn't want nobody to know that I couldn't read or write, but the way I talked, anyone with common _____ would know that I didn't have too much good schooling.

Questions

1. How could Brenda be a good student and not learn how to read and write well? What do you think was going on?
2. Why did the schools keep passing Brenda? What options did they have?
3. How do you think Brenda's English teacher helped her when she was in the ninth grade?
4. What pressures do teachers have in trying to provide students with a lot of extra help? What can be done to help the situation?
5. Why did Brenda leave school?
6. What can schools do to help students in situations similar to Brenda's?
7. What do you think the relationship between Brenda and her mother was like over the years?

Lesson Five Being Put Down

I got pulled out of the program I was going to. Yeah. I wasn't catching on fast enough. I mean it hurt me, because I work there, and it was hard for me to deal with it. I mean, I'm kind of hurting because I've been working there over five years. I was going everyday. And all of a sudden they just put me out.

Now I come here two nights a week, Monday and Wednesday. Just with my tutor, because I can't catch up with a group. You have to know something to be with a group, and I'm not on that level, yet. I hope I get on that level. I'm not there, you know.

The thing we just read was a story about this guy who used to come here a long time ago. I guess it was a couple of years ago. It motivates you, you know? It makes you want to keep going and you feel that some way you're going to learn something for yourself. Sometimes you don't think you can learn until you see other people do it. So that motivates you a little bit. Well, a lot, I might say, a lot.

I want to try to learn things that are going to help me today with what I need now, like filling out applications, stuff like that; things that I need now. I'd just like to go home and read my mail. If I could do that I wouldn't work so much. You know it's just like going to China and you can't catch the bus because you can't read the signs. So it's just like being in China, you know.

If I see something I can't read I get frustrated, so sometimes I don't try to read because I know I can't. So in the back of your mind, you're never comfortable with your self and your know-how. Sometimes I pretend I can go to the store and read the label, but I can't do that.

I don't take the highway too much, because I might get lost. But I have a little more confidence. I've got a little thing called a spelling machine. You just punch a word in and it helps you. I need help with a lot of words. You know capital letters? I don't understand capital letters. But I can punch the word in and I know what to say. So this helps me out a lot, it makes me feel comfortable in my house.

The most important thing I've learned is don't give up. I think that's the most important thing. I have a problem. I don't know what you call it, some kind of learning problem. I had always had a learning problem. So it doesn't come fast for me. I have to go over things over and over before it sinks in. But I can't give up because I used to have to depend on people to do things for me. I had a woman that dropped me for that. You have somebody who fills your money order out for you. And you think you're paying the bills, and she's making the money order out. I wasn't sure they were getting paid. So you figure it out, she was taking the money. I had an accident, and I thought I had insurance, right? And I didn't have any insurance. I gave her \$1500 and I had an accident, and now my truck can't get fixed because she took the money.

So, this is what I'm saying, I'd like to know how to do things. You can't trust people. Some people don't care if you're blind, crippled or crazy. They'll take advantage of you. So that's one reason I come here, too. And you're ashamed to let people know about it. You can't tell anybody because you're scared what they might say. Or you know they're going laugh at you. Most of them do laugh at you.

It's like walking around and everybody knows your problem. Everybody knows my problem. And, you know what I'm talking about, how people might have a secret and everybody knows it. And you know they're talking about you, that you can't do this or you can't do that.

I'd like to get outdoors. To get out of the state is what I'm trying to say. Travelling, because once you can't read you're scared to go to

some other state. You know how hard it was when you first came here. So you don't want to go to some other town and have the same problem.

Right. You go down and put your application in, you know. But I can't do that, that's one reason I'm stuck here. That's why I'd like to know how to read and write. Because I'm stuck here and there's nothing I can do about it.

I'd like to get a better job. But you're scared because one year my boss wrote [an evaluation]. He wrote on the back of it, "Eddie can't read or write." That what he wrote on the evaluating form. And I don't know why. I mean there was no reason for him to do that. Then the big boss, he looked at that and said, "Eddie can't read or write, let's not give him a raise, let's give him a dime raise," right? Because that's what it boils down to. I didn't get a raise that year.

You know you have limitations to what you can do, you know what I'm saying? So I'm stuck. It's not like I can go out there and get a job doing something else because I don't have the ability for it. So you have to settle for what you can get most of the time.

Just sitting down and writing a song, you know. That would be neat. That would be great for me. I have a song in my head I want to write.

I live by myself, so I have to be motivated because I don't have anybody to do anything for me. And I get afraid. I'm ashamed to ask the lady I see to do things for me. So that motivates me. To be able to do things for myself because you're ashamed to ask people to do it for you. That motivates me, I think.

I'm getting older now, and I'd like to learn to read before I die. I'm getting too old, and can't read, you know? I'd like to learn how to read more.

It would make you feel a lot better because you never really like it when you can't read. You don't enjoy yourself like most people can. In the back of your mind you know you can't do a lot of things. And people who know you, they think you're handicapped. Most people think you're handicapped if you can't read you know. Some people have never been around anybody who can't read, so they're thinking they got a problem. Like this one guy told me a couple years ago, because we have two handicapped guys there, right? We got two handicapped guys, and he told me, you're just like John and Keith. John and Keith, they're handicapped. One of them, he didn't develop too good. And this guy told me, he said, "You're just like John and Keith," you know. But I'm not. I don't consider myself handicapped.

But people say it because they don't know anything about it. I guess they've been around people who read all their life. He thinks if people can't read they're handicapped or have a problem. But I don't think he understands. I don't think he's ever been around somebody who can't read or write. It seems like he doesn't know too much about people who can't read. That's where his mind is. I'd like to show him one of those books that the people wrote a story about themselves and how they learned how to read. Some people, they're real educated, but they don't know people who can't read and write. They think something's wrong with them. They think they're handicapped. It's just that they had no way to prove themselves because they never went to school. You know what I'm saying?

Ed

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
motivate	mo-ti-vate (3 syllables)	
sometimes	some-times (2 syllables)	
application	ap-pli-ca-tion (4 syllables)	
yourself	your-self (2 syllables)	
frustrated	frus-trat-ed (3 syllables)	
insurance	in-sur-ance (3 syllables)	
confidence	con-fi-dence (3 syllables)	
themselves	them-selves (2 syllables)	
ashamed	a-shamed (2 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

I got _____ out of the program I was going to. Yeah. I wasn't _____ on fast enough. I mean it hurt me, because I work there, and it was hard for me to deal with it. I mean, I'm kind of hurting because I've been working there over five years. I was going _____. And all of a sudden they just put me out.

Now I come here two nights a week, Monday and Wednesday. Just with my tutor, because I can't _____ up with a group. You have to know something to be with a group, and I'm not on that level, yet. I hope I get on that level. I'm not there, you know.

The thing we just read was a story about this guy who used to come here a long time ago. I guess it was a couple of years ago. It _____ you, you know? It makes you want to keep going and you feel that some way you're going to learn something for yourself. Sometimes you don't think you can learn until you see other people do it. So that motivates you a little bit. Well, a lot, I might say, a lot.

I want to try to _____ things that are going to help me today with what I need now, like filling out applications, stuff like that; things that I need now. I'd just like to go home and read my mail. If I could do that I wouldn't work so much. You know it's just like going to China and you can't catch the bus because you can't _____ the signs. So it's just like being in China, you know.

If I see something I can't read I get _____, so sometimes I don't try to read because I know I can't. So in the back of your mind, you're never comfortable with your self and your know-how. Sometimes I _____ I can go to the store and read the label, but I can't do that.

I don't take the highway too much, because I might get lost. But I have a little more _____. I've got a little thing called a spelling machine. You just punch a word in and it helps you. I need help with a lot of words. You know capital letters? I don't understand _____ letters. But I can punch the word in and I know what to say. So this helps me out a lot, it makes me feel _____ in my house.

The most important thing I've learned is don't _____ up. I think that's the most important thing. I have a problem. I don't know what you call it, some kind of learning _____. I had always had a learning problem. So it doesn't come _____ for me. I have to go over things over and over before it sinks in. But I can't give up because I used to have to _____ on people to do things for me. I had a woman that dropped me for that. You have somebody who fills

your money order out for you. And you think you're _____ the bills, and she's making the money order out. I wasn't sure they were getting paid. So you figure it out, she was _____ the money. I had an accident, and I thought I had insurance, right? And I didn't have any insurance. I gave her \$1500 and I had an accident, and now my truck can't get fixed because she took the money.

So, this is what I'm saying, I'd like to know _____ to do things. You can't trust people. Some _____ don't care if you're blind, crippled or crazy. They'll take _____ of you. So that's one reason I come here, too. And you're ashamed to let people know about it. You can't tell anybody because you're scared what they might say. Or you know they're going _____ at you. Most of them do laugh at you.

It's like walking around and everybody knows your _____. Everybody knows my problem. And, you know what I'm talking about, how people might have a _____ and everybody knows it. And you know they're talking about you, that you can't do this or you can't do that.

I'd like to get outdoors. To get out of the state is what I'm trying to say. Travelling, because once you can't read you're scared to go to some other state. You know how hard it was when you first came here. So you don't want to go to some other _____ and have the same problem.

Right. You go down and put your _____ in, you know. But I can't do that, that's one reason I'm stuck here. That's why I'd like to know how to read and write. Because I'm stuck here and there's _____ I can do about it.

I'd like to get a _____ job. But you're scared because one year my boss wrote [an evaluation]. He wrote on the back of it, "Eddie can't read or write." That what he wrote on the evaluating form. And I don't

know why. I mean there was no _____ for him to do that. Then the big boss, he looked at that and said, "Eddie can't read or write, let's not give him a raise, let's give him a dime raise," right? Because that's what it boils down to. I didn't get a _____ that year.

You know you have _____ to what you can do, you know what I'm saying? So I'm stuck. It's not like I can go out there and get a job doing something else because I don't have the ability for it. So you have to _____ for what you can get most of the time.

Just sitting down and _____ a song, you know. That would be neat. That would be great for me. I have a song in my head I want to write.

I live by _____, so I have to be motivated because I don't have anybody to do anything for me. And I get afraid. I'm ashamed to ask the lady I see to do things for me. So that _____ me. To be able to do things for myself because you're _____ to ask people to do it for you. That motivates me, I think.

I'm getting older now, and I'd like to learn to read before I _____. I'm getting too old, and can't read, you know? I'd like to learn how to read more.

It would make you feel a lot better because you never really _____ it when you can't read. You don't _____ yourself like most people can. In the back of your mind you know you can't do a lot of things. And people who know you, they think you're handicapped. Most people think you're handicapped if you can't read you know. Some people have never been around anybody who can't read, so they're thinking they got a _____. Like this one guy told me a couple years ago, because we have two handicapped guys there, right? We got two handicapped guys, and he told me, you're just like John and Keith. John and Keith, they're handicapped. One of them, he didn't develop too good. And this guy told me, he said, "You're just like John and

Keith," you know. But I'm not. I don't _____ myself handicapped.

But people say it because they don't know _____ about it. I guess they've been around people who read all their life. He thinks if people can't read they're handicapped or have a problem. But I don't think he _____. I don't think he's ever been around somebody who can't read or write. It seems like he doesn't know too much about _____ who can't read. That's where his mind is. I'd like to show him one of those _____ that the people wrote a story about themselves and how they learned how to read. Some people, they're real _____, but they don't know people who can't read and write. They think something's wrong with them. They think they're handicapped. It's just that they had no way to prove themselves because they never went to school. You know what I'm _____?

Questions

1. Under what circumstances, if any, should adult literacy programs terminate a student for lack of progress? What impact do you think this had on Ed?
2. What did Ed like about reading the stories of other students?
3. How important is it for you to read about the lives of other students?
4. What problems did Ed experience in not being able to read well as an adult?
5. What do you think learning how to read means to Ed? What do you base this on?
6. If you were to write a letter to Ed what would you like to say?

Lesson Six Civil Rights

Me and my brothers, Derrell and Dennis and other people we went to school with, got involved with people in the community, with civil rights groups, and with Mount Olive Baptist church. Rev. Battles, he met Martin Luther king and got other ministers together, and began a civil rights movement in Hartford. He got black people together in the city recognizing that we should be one unit instead of separate. We was working on that, and then with the Baptist people and the Catholic people in West Hartford; because at that time the people in West Hartford didn't know much about blacks or want to be with blacks. Somehow, we threw out a line to them. They bought our line, so we kind of merged together and did a religious service together in West Hartford. Then the people in West Hartford came to Hartford and did a service with us. I really liked that. I met a lot of people. They got to know us and we got to know them.

A new civil rights movement came up in the North End called NEACP (North End Community Action Program). That was in the late 60s. We got involved with them. There was a Reverend Herbert Smith. He was involved with NEACP. He started a center called the Inner City Exchange. We got involved with them. He knew different ministers outside the Hartford area. This is how we got in touch with the people from West Hartford and formed an alliance, black and white, in a Christian manner.

This is how we got the program off the ground. It was very effective and everybody was concerned. Maybe 60% were black students in their late teens and early twenties. The rest were whites in their teens and early twenties. There was about sixty black and white students in Hartford and maybe 125 from West Hartford. We merged together and talked about all our feelings about blacks and whites. Then we visited each others' homes. We became more effective. We became more of a tight knit friendship.

That let me look at another person than myself. I could see basically where they was coming from, how they was thinking, how they was raised, how they lived, and what their values are. And in turn, to look at us, saying who we are, what we like to do, how we think, and how we live. We both found out how we can merge our thoughts together as one. We wanted to spread this kind of idea to everyone else concerned in the area. After a year or two, the group fell apart. Everybody went their own way. People was graduating or going to other fields.

Derrick

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
community	com-mun-i-ty (4 syllables)	
together	to-geth-er (3 syllables)	
separate	sep-a-rate (3 syllables)	
different	dif-fer-ent (3 syllables)	
tight	tight (one syllable)	
alliance	al-li-ance (3 syllables)	
effective	e-ffec-tive (3 syllables)	
apart	a-part (2 syllables)	
concerned	con-cerned (2 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

Me and my _____, Derrell and Dennis and other people we went to school with, got involved with people in the community, with civil rights groups, and with Mount Olive Baptist church. Rev. Battles, he met Martin Luther king and got other _____ together, and began a civil rights movement in Hartford. He got black people _____ in the city recognizing that we should be one unit instead of separate. We was working on that, and then with the Baptist people and the Catholic people in West Hartford; because at that time the people in West Hartford didn't know much about blacks or want to be with blacks. Somehow, we threw out a line to them. They bought our line, so we kind of _____ together and did a religious service together in West Hartford. Then the people in West Hartford came to Hartford and did a service with us. I really liked that. I met a lot of people. They got to know us and we got to know them.

A new civil rights movement came up in the North End called NEACP (North End Community Action Program). That was in the late 60s. We got involved with them. There was a Reverend Herbert Smith. He was involved with NEACP. He started a center called the Inner City Exchange. We got involved with them. He knew _____ ministers outside the Hartford area. This is how we got in touch with the _____ from West Hartford and formed an alliance, black and white, in a Christian manner.

This is how we got the program off the ground. It was very _____ and everybody was concerned. Maybe 60% were black students in their late teens and early twenties. The rest were whites in their teens and early twenties. There was about sixty black and white students in Hartford and maybe 125 from West Hartford. We merged together and talked about all our _____ about blacks and

whites. Then we visited each others' homes. We became more effective. We became more of a tight knit _____.

That let me look at another person than myself. I could see basically where they was coming from, how they was thinking, how they was raised, how they lived, and what their _____ are. And in turn, to look at us, saying who we are, what we like to do, how we think, and how we live. We both found out how we can _____ our thoughts together as one. We wanted to spread this kind of idea to everyone else concerned in the area. After a year or two, the group fell _____. Everybody went their own way. People was graduating or going to other fields.

Questions:

1. How important do you think it was that black folks and white folks from Hartford West Hartford got together through their churches?
2. What do you think each group learned from each other?
3. What opportunities are there now for people from different backgrounds to learn more about each other's lives?
4. How important is this for individuals?
5. How important is this for communities?
6. What would you like folks from backgrounds different from yours to know about you?
7. What are some ways of communicating such information?
8. What would you like to know about people from different backgrounds?
9. Which groups are you most interested in learning more about?
10. What would you like to know and how can you obtain such information?

Lesson Seven

My Calling as a Missionary

I was rebellious before I got into church because I lost my brother in '83. I was rebellious to the world, basically, and to any religious group. When I felt I got my head together, I joined the Hopewell Baptist Church in '87. I became very involved spiritually and mentally with the church, because it was something I lacked over the years. I wanted to apply myself more to be a righteous person. That was my goal. And to learn about the Spirit of God, and what he stands for, and the Scripture. I wanted to set myself to be a righteous person.

Before joining the church, being out there in the streets, if I felt like I did something bad, I would start going to church. My mother would see this. "You haven't been to church before. That's why you started to go." She seen this pattern I was going into. Every time I see myself getting into trouble, I start going to church or start praying more. Then she said, "You must have done something wrong, so that's why you come to church. Don't play with God. Be serious. If you want to know God, put yourself in 'The Way.'"

That's what I did, I put myself in "the Way." I started reading Scripture. Then I started going to church more to listen to what the pastor have to say. I was getting a liking for it and I was humbled. I'm the kind of person, if you can get a tear out of me, you're doing good. The church got a tear out of me. I felt that was the church for me to join.

Twenty years ago, there was a lady doing a reading of me. That means she can predict your past, present, and future. She said I would be involved with the cloth. That relates to me that I may be a minister, a deacon, or some type of clergy, or a missionary. People I don't even know see me on the street and say, "Hi Deacon," or Hi, Reverend." My mom's friends say, "Oh Derrick looks like a minister." These things I have been hearing all my life. In the back of my mind, I think it kind

of played a part in my saying, "Well, maybe it's time for me to get serious with church." Then I kind of figured out, "Am I going to be something with the church or what?" This is why I stay with the church, to see what's going to come out of it. I put myself in "The Way" just to see what's going to happen in a spiritual sense.

My first thought was I was going to be a deacon. That hasn't happened as yet, but my pastor at the time recommended me to become a trustee. So I've been a trustee for three years. That was something brand new to me, but I worked at it.

I'm not a trustee right now. I'm doing missionary work. I feel good about doing that. My missionary work is at Literacy Volunteers. Inside the church itself, my missionary work is with senior citizens. Outside the church, it is with Literacy Volunteers. There's a strong connection between my religion and my work with Literacy Volunteers. I didn't have the background I have now as a Baptist, as being a spiritually corrected person in the Baptist faith, I don't feel I'd be in a position I'm in right now. God has opened up a lot of new doors for me in a different avenue and let me treat this as a mission to help my brothers and sisters with their reading and writing.

I still don't know what part I'm going to play as far as the church, itself goes. Will I be a deacon later on or will I still be a trustee or missionary? I'm not concerned with the different roles or titles right now. What's important for me right now as a missionary, is the skills and knowledge I've gotten from Literacy Volunteers. What it has done for me is to open up different doors in my life. I want to open doors for other people's lives.

Derrick

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
rebellious	re-bel-lious (3 syllables)	
religious	re-lig-ious (3 syllables)	
involved	in-volved (2 syllables)	
spiritually	spir-i-tu-a-lly (5 syllables)	
righteous	right-eous (2 syllables)	
listen	lis-ten (2 syllables)	
missionary	mis-ion-ar-y (4 syllables)	
connection	con-nec-tion (3 syllables)	
knowledge	know-ledge (2 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

I was _____ before I got into church because I lost my brother in '83. I was rebellious to the world, basically, and to any _____ group. When I felt I got my head together, I joined the Hopewell Baptist Church in '87. I became very _____ spiritually and mentally with the church, because it was something I lacked over the years. I wanted to apply myself more to be a _____ person. That was my goal. And to learn about the Spirit of God, and what he stands for, and the Scripture. I wanted to set myself to be a righteous _____.

Before joining the church, being out there in the streets, if I felt like I did something bad, I would start going to _____. My mother would see this. "You haven't been to church before. That's why you started to go." She seen this pattern I was going into. Every time I see myself getting into _____, I start going to church or start praying more. Then she said, "You must have done something wrong, so that's why you come to church. Don't play with God. Be serious. If you want to know God, put yourself in 'The Way.'"

That's what I did, I put myself in "the Way." I started _____ Scripture. Then I started going to church more to listen to what the pastor have to say. I was getting a liking for it and I was _____. I'm the kind of person, if you can get a tear out of me, you're doing good. The church got a _____ out of me. I felt that was the church for me to join.

Twenty years ago, there was a lady doing a _____ of me. That means she can predict your past, present, and future. She said I would be involved with the cloth. That relates to me that I may be a minister, a _____, or some type of clergy, or a missionary. People I don't even know see me on the street and say, "Hi Deacon," or Hi, Reverend." My mom's friends say, "Oh Derrick looks like a _____." These things I have been hearing all my life. In the back of my mind, I think it kind of played a part in my saying, "Well, maybe it's time for me to get serious with church." Then I kind of figured out, "Am I going to be something with the church or what?" This is why I stay with the church, to see what's going to come out of it. I put myself in "The Way" just to see what's going to happen in a _____ sense.

My first thought was I was going to be a deacon. That hasn't happened as yet, but my pastor at the time recommended me to become a trustee. So I've been a _____ for three years. That was something brand new to me, but I worked at it.

I'm not a trustee right now. I'm doing _____ work. I feel good about doing that. My missionary work is at Literacy Volunteers. Inside the church itself, my missionary work is with _____ citizens. Outside the church, it is with Literacy Volunteers. There's a strong connection between my religion and my work with Literacy Volunteers. I didn't have the background I have now as a Baptist, as being a spiritually _____ person in the Baptist faith, I don't feel I'd be in a position I'm in right now. God has opened up a lot of new doors for me in a different avenue and let me treat this as a mission to help my brothers and sisters with their reading and writing.

I still don't know what part I'm going to play as far as the _____, itself goes. Will I be a deacon later on or will I still be a trustee or missionary? I'm not _____ with the different roles or titles right now. What's important for me right now as a missionary, is the skills and _____ I've gotten from Literacy Volunteers. What it has done for me is to open up different doors in my life. I want to open _____ for other people's lives.

Questions:

1. How do you think Derrick learned about the church?
2. What do you think Derrick means by wanting to be a righteous person? What does this mean to you?
3. What do you think Derrick experienced in church?
4. What does Derrick mean by missionary work? What does the phrase, missionary work, mean to you?
5. What does he mean when he says, inside the church his missionary work is with senior citizens, outside the church it is with Literacy Volunteers?
6. What's the difference between missionary work inside and outside the church?
7. What do you think are the connections for Derrick between his spiritual life and Literacy Volunteers?

Lesson Eight

Living at Charter Oak

Everybody knew one another. You could leave your doors open, and nobody would come in. Now, it's like, if you leave your doors open, they rob you. There's drugs all around there. People drive their cars so fast. It's a shame, you better hurry up and get your kids off the road. They had a meeting last month, and only ten people showed up; and I mean, that's not showing any kind of community concern.

And just last week, a car was going so fast down the road, it went into a house. It couldn't turn cause it was going so fast. This girl, about sixteen, fell out the car. I was coming from my mother's house, and I was screaming cause she was so young. She was so young. She was only sixteen years old and I thought she was dead. She's a little Spanish girl. There's still nothing being done about the neighborhood. We didn't have as many Spanish people as we have now in Charter Oak; we didn't see no Spanish people but one or two times. It was mostly black and white.

There was some prejudice but not that much. There was prejudice, though. You could tell because the white parents didn't want their kids playing with us, but they did anyway. Like, they wouldn't let us come into the house. We always had to wait for them outside, or they had nasty attitudes. The white kids that we did play with, we got along pretty good. We used to go to camp Courant together, and swim and eat cookies and "choke" sandwiches—that's peanut butter and jelly—we called them "choke" sandwiches. There are very few white people there now. It's mostly Blacks and Puerto Ricans living there now.

Every night there's fighting, or there's shooting up in the air. They drive like crazy up and down the streets; it's just like they don't give a damn about the kids, you know. There's just no consideration of the young generation. I'm talking about kids that play outside—five, six, seven years old, and as far as them shooting up in the air, it's just not

doing them any good. Then there's those who are fourteen, sixteen, eighteen, twenty-one, most of them don't go to school and they're dealing drugs. If they know like I know they should stay in school.

When we was coming up, everybody knew each other—it was like a family. We always had somewhere to go in the summer, we went to the record house where they had bands playing. This was in the center of Charter Oak Terrace, now they're trying to make it into a YMCA.

We had a lot of stuff going on. We had the record house where you paid a quarter to listen to music, you had the records playing, you could dance then. On a Friday, a band would be playing, and you had to pay two dollars to get in, and you could dance 'till one or two o'clock. My mother always made me come in at once. We'd slide out by our father 'cause he'd be out gambling, and we'd be crying, "Dad, we were dancing and forgot what time it was!" He'd say, "Shut up girl, you tell her you were with me." He used to save our lives.

If the band wasn't playing at the center, somebody was holding it at their house. There was always something to do. They had volleyball. We had a lot of stuff.

Brenda

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
everybody	ev-er-y-bo-dy (5 syllables)	
shame	shame (one syllable)	
community	com-mu-ni-ty (4 syllables)	
concern	con-cern (2 syllables)	
neighborhood	neigh-bor-hood (3 syllables)	

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
prejudice	prej-u-dice (3 syllables)	
fighting	fight-ing (2 syllables)	
consideration	con-sid-er-a-tion (5 syllables)	
gambling	gam-bling (2 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

Everybody knew one another. You could leave your doors _____, and nobody would come in. Now, it's like, if you leave your doors open, they _____ you. There's drugs all around there. People drive their cars so fast. It's a shame, you better hurry up and get your kids off the road. They had a meeting last month, and only ten people showed up; and I mean, that's not showing any kind of _____ concern.

And just last week, a car was going so fast down the road, it went into a _____. It couldn't turn cause it was going so fast. This girl, about sixteen, fell out the car. I was coming from my mother's house, and I was _____ cause she was so young. She was so young. She was only sixteen years old and I thought she was dead. She's a little Spanish girl. There's still nothing being done about the _____. We didn't have as many Spanish people as we have now in Charter Oak; we didn't see no Spanish people but one or two times. It was mostly black and white.

There was some _____ but not that much. There was prejudice, though. You could tell because the white parents didn't want their kids _____ with us, but they did anyway. Like, they wouldn't let us come into the house. We always had to wait for them outside, or they had nasty _____. The white kids that we did play with, we got along pretty good. We used to go to camp Courant together, and swim

and eat cookies and “choke” sandwiches—that’s peanut butter and jelly—we called them “choke” sandwiches. There are very few white people there now. It’s mostly Blacks and Puerto Ricans _____ there now.

Every night there’s fighting, or there’s shooting up in the air. They _____ like crazy up and down the streets; it’s just like they don’t give a damn about the kids, you know. There’s just no _____ of the young generation. I’m talking about kids that play outside—five, six, seven years old, and as far as them shooting up in the air, it’s just not doing them any good. Then there’s those who are fourteen, sixteen, eighteen, twenty-one, most of them don’t go to school and they’re _____ drugs. If they know like I know they should _____ in school.

When we was coming up, it’s like _____ knew each other—it was like a family. We always had somewhere to go in the summer, we went to the record house, where they had bands playing. This was in the center of Charter Oak Terrace, but now they’re trying to make it into a YMCA.

We had a lot of stuff going on. We had the record house where you paid a quarter to listen to music, you had the records playing, you could dance then. On a Friday, a band would be playing, and you had to pay two dollars to get in, and you could _____ ‘till one or two o’clock. My mother always made me come in at once. We’d slide out by our father ‘cause he’d be out gambling, and we’d be crying, “Dad, we were dancing and forgot what time it was!” He’d say, “Shut up girl, you tell her you were with me.” He used to save our lives.

If the band wasn’t playing at the _____, somebody was holding it at their house. There was always something to do. They had volleyball. We had a lot of stuff.

Questions

1. How does Brenda describe life in Charter Oak while she was growing up?
2. How does she describe life in Charter Oak now?
3. What might account for the differences?
4. What do you remember about your neighborhood when you were growing up?
5. How would you describe your neighborhood at this time?
6. What questions do you have for Brenda?

Lesson Nine

Hard Times at School

I was nine years old when I came to Connecticut. I come with my aunt by bus. We rode all night and we stopped to pick up other people on the way to Hartford. I thought Hartford was a beautiful city, but I felt kind of disappointed anyway.

My aunt had an apartment on 44 Capen Street. My mother and my two sisters came soon thereafter. We all lived together. We started at Clark Street School. My teacher was Mrs. Mabry. A couple of years later we moved to Sanford Street. I went to Fox Middle School.

My teacher's name was Miss Hoskins. The kids in the classroom did not like me. The girls were not nice because they were jealous of me. They did not want to be my friends. I would talk to the boys in class and the girls did not like it when I talked to the boys.

Sometimes I would have to leave school early because the girls wanted to jump on me. I took a swimming class but I didn't go because the girls would be waiting to start trouble with me. Half the time I didn't go to school.

My teacher's name was Mr. Hall. I was in his class for a while. The girls were at a high reading level. I wasn't. Sometimes I would go to gym but I didn't like my gym teacher very much. I would try to play basketball in the gym with the girls but I didn't do too well. The girls didn't want me to play basketball with them. I played hooky from school to keep from going to gym. I went to the park with the boys, instead.

I went to Hartford High for three years. I was not ready for high school. I got pregnant when I was in high school.

There were some bullies in the class. I missed a lot of days from school because the kids would pick on me.

I left school and went to Annie Fisher. We learned to prepare food for the teachers. I had a lot of friends when I was there. We all had a lot of fun in the class. Every day we would walk home together.

Those were the days but those days are gone. We all have to grow old over the years. I have been going to school for a long time for my G.E.D. Sometimes I feel like giving up but I cannot give up on getting it. It is not easy but I will not give up. I will get my G.E.D. someday soon.

Joyce

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
beautiful	beau-ti-ful (3 syllables)	
disappointed	dis-a-pointed (4 syllables)	
together	to-geth-er (3 syllables)	
jealous	jeal-ous (2 syllables)	
friends	friends (one syllable)	
instead	in-stead (2 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

I was nine years old when I came to Connecticut. I come with my aunt by bus. We rode all _____ and we stopped to pick up other people

on the way to Hartford. I thought Hartford was a _____ city, but I felt kind of disappointed anyway.

My aunt had an apartment on 44 Capen Street. My mother and my two sisters came soon thereafter. We all _____ together. We started at Clark Street School. My teacher was Mrs. Mabry. A couple of years later we _____ to Sanford Street. I went to Fox Middle School.

My teacher's name was Miss Hoskins. The kids in the classroom did not _____ me. The girls were not nice because they were _____ of me. They did not want to be my friends. I would talk to the boys in class and the girls did not like it when I _____ to the boys.

Sometimes I would have to _____ school early because the girls wanted to jump on me. I took a swimming class but I didn't go because the girls would be waiting to start _____ with me. Half the time I didn't go to school.

My teacher's name was Mr. Hall. I was in his class for a while. The girls were at a high _____ level. I wasn't. Sometimes I would go to gym but I didn't like my gym teacher very much. I would try to play _____ in the gym with the girls but I didn't do too well. The girls didn't want me to play basketball with them. I played hooky from school to keep from going to gym. I went to the park with the _____, instead.

I went to Hartford High for three years. I was not _____ for high school. I got _____ when I was in high school.

There were some bullies in the class. I missed a lot of days from _____ because the kids would pick on me.

I left school and went to Annie Fisher. We learned to _____ food for the teachers. I had a lot of friends when I was there. We all had a lot of fun in the class. Every day we would walk home together.

Those were the days but those days are gone. We all have to grow old over the years. I have been going to _____ for a long time for my G.E.D. Sometimes I feel like giving up but I cannot give up on _____ it. It is not _____ but I will not give up. I will get my G.E.D. someday soon.

Questions

1. Why do you think it might have been difficult for Joyce to be accepted by the other girls in school?
2. Was there anything Joyce might have been able to do?
3. What can schools do to help create a healthier climate where everyone is accepted?
4. What did Joyce like about going to Annie Fisher after she left school?
5. If you could write a letter to Joyce what would you like to say?

Lesson Ten

I Like to Learn and I like to Support My Kids

I'm a woman who likes to learn. I don't like to be sitting down at a desk. I like to be moving around, learning a lot of different things. The point of my education is to get a job and support myself. I used to support myself for six years without help. It's true the baby's father worked, but I was earning my own money. I was spending my own money. I liked to depend on myself a lot.

If you want to do something, if your husband tries to stop you, don't let him stop you. Always keep fighting. Never give up. If you want to get a job and support your family, and it's good for you, and it's better for your life, go for it.

I was talking to my niece about four days ago. She said to me, in front of my brother, "You know what daddy? I'm proud of my aunt because she's doing something good for her life and I'm proud of her." The other ones love it. They said, "Are you going to school?" And I said, "Yes, I'm going to school."

"Daddy, you better go to school, too," she said. Her father doesn't know how to read and write. She said, "If she can do it, you can do it." He said, "No, I'm working, I can't do that now."

Sometimes, my husband gets angry. He says, "Maria, you've got a daughter who's eight years old and you've got one other. You've got to think about your girls." When I was doing the AIDS program before, with Regina, all of them got mad except her. She said, "No aunt, don't stop." My husband said, "You're going to get sick. You know you've got five kids at home. If something happens to you, who knows what's going to happen?"

Our program is to help people with the sickness. Like, helping them and getting involved with them, cooking for them, taking care of the

house, reading to them, and being there when they need you. I like it very much. It's very interesting to me.

I used to cook for Jesus. His mother is in a wheelchair. And I stopped that because my car was in the shop. I stopped also because my husband got mad. He got angry. But I told my husband, "I stopped now but when I get my car fixed, I'm going back."

I've always been this way, helping others. And my husband asks, "Why don't you change?" Sometimes people get too much from me. And he gets mad and says, "You help other people but when you need help nobody wants to give you a hand." It's true what he says. That's what he gets mad at. But now he got used to it, and now he don't fight no more. Sometimes he says words that hurt my feelings but I let it pass.

Maria

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
learn	learn (one syllable)	
different	dif-fer-ent (3 syllables)	
education	ed-u-ca-tion (4 syllables)	
angry	an-gry (2 syllables)	
except	ex-cept (2 syllables)	
sickness	sick-ness (2 syllables)	
interesting	in-ter-es-ting (4 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

I'm a woman who likes to _____. I don't like to be sitting down at a _____. I like to be moving around, learning a lot of different things. The point of my _____ is to get a job and support myself. I used to support myself for six years without help. It's true the baby's father worked, but I was earning my own money. I was _____ my own money. I liked to depend on myself a lot.

If you want to do _____, if your husband tries to stop you, don't let him stop you. Always keep fighting. Never give up. If you want to get a job and support your family, and it's good for you, and it's better for your life, _____ for it.

I was talking to my niece about four days ago. She said to me, in front of my brother, "You know what daddy? I'm _____ of my aunt because she's doing something good for her life and I'm proud of her." The other ones love it. They said, "Are you going to school?" And I said, "Yes, I'm _____ to school."

"Daddy, you better go to school, too," she said. Her father doesn't know how to read and write. She said, "If she can do it, you can do it." He said, "No, I'm _____, I can't do that now."

Sometimes, my father gets angry. He says, "Maria, you've got a _____ who's eight years old and you've got one other. You've got to think about your girls." When I was doing the AIDS program before, with Regina, all of them got mad _____ her. She said, "No aunt, don't stop." My father said, "You're going to get sick. You know you've got five kids at home. If something happens to you, who knows what's going to happen?"

Our program is to help _____ with the sickness. Like, helping them and getting _____ with them, cooking for them, taking care

of the house, reading to them, and being there when they need you. I like it very much. It's very _____ to me.

I used to cook for Jesus. His mother is in a wheelchair. And I stopped that because my _____ was in the shop. I stopped also because my husband got mad. He got angry. But I told my _____, "I stopped now but when I get my car fixed, I'm going back."

I've always been this way, helping others. And my husband asks, "Why don't you change?" Sometimes people get too much from me. And he gets mad and says, "You help other people but when you need help _____ wants to give you a hand." It's true what he says. That's what he gets mad at. But now he got used to it, and now he don't fight no more. Sometimes he says words that _____ my feelings but I let it pass.

Questions

1. From what you read, describe Maria.
2. What stands out for you about her?
3. How would you describe the relationship between Maria and her husband?
4. What is important to Maria?
5. What did you like the most in reading her story?
6. What would you like to ask Maria? What do you think she'd say?

Voices from Eastern Europe
George Demetrion (Editor)
Manager of Community-Based Programming
Literacy Volunteers of Greater Hartford

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Lesson One

Lesson Two

Lesson Three

Lesson Four

Lesson Five

Lesson Six

Lesson Seven

Lesson Eight

Lesson Nine

Voices from Eastern Europe
George Demetrion (Editor)
Manager of Community-Based Programming
Literacy Volunteers of Greater Hartford

Lesson One
From Poland to the United States

My country is Poland. I worked in my country as a kindergarten teacher. I took care of the kids. I played with them.

I read books and taught them many songs and dances. I taught them the alphabet. They drew cartoons. I taught them how to paint and exercise. They watched educational programs in the classroom.

I really liked to take care of the kids because I loved them so much. I wish I could teach here. First I have to learn English. I read a little Latin. Twenty-five years ago, I read it well.

I came to America fifteen years ago. My daughter, Agnes, came with me. My other daughter, Ursula, came to America fifteen years ago. I am a grandmother. I have two granddaughters, Monica and Anne. Agnes went to high school here. She is a very good student. Two years ago she finished high school and received a diploma with special honors. Ursula is a registered nurse. Agnes is a store manager. Agnes lives in Hartford. Ursula lives in Marlborough. Ursula had a little boy named Daniel in January. He's very, very cute.

Krystna Szaniawska

Words	Syllables	Write Sentence
kindergarten	Kind-er-gar-ten (4 syllables)	
alphabet	a-pha-bet (3 syllables)	
special	spec-i-al (3 syllables)	
registered	reg-i-stered (3 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

My _____ is Poland. I worked in my country as a kindergarten _____ . I took care of the kids. I played with them.

I read books and taught them many _____ and dances. I taught them the _____. They drew cartoons. I taught them how to paint and exercise. They watched educational _____ in the classroom.

I really liked to take care of the kids because I loved them so much. I wish I could _____ here. First I have to learn English. I read a little Latin. Twenty-five years ago, I read it well.

I came to America fifteen years ago. My daughter, Agnes, came with me. My other daughter, Ursula, came to _____ fifteen years ago. I am a grandmother. I have two granddaughters, Monica and Anne. Agnes went to high school here. She is a very good student. Two years ago she _____ high school and _____ a diploma with special honors. Ursula is a registered nurse. Agnes is a store manager. Agnes lives in Hartford. Ursula lives in Marlborough. Ursula had a little _____ named Daniel in January. He's very, very cute.

Questions

1. What was Krystna's profession in Poland? Describe what she did in her work?
2. Describe Krystna's family.
3. What else would you like to know about Krystna or her family?
4. What stands out for you in this story?

Lesson Two My First Job

I had my first job in Hungary in Budapest. It was a long time ago. I started in 1953. It was a very big leather factory. I made briefcases, purses, and wallets for women and for men. I made many small and large suitcases. I also made nice leather belts.

It was a nice, but a very hard job over there. But I liked my job. I was a good worker. But later came the bad times in 1956. There was a revolution. This time was the worst for me because my job ended.

I was sad and unhappy. This time will be a bad memory for me forever.

Imre Sipos

Words	Syllables	Write Sentence
leather	lea-ther (2 syllables)	
briefcase	brief-case (2 syllables)	
suitcase	suit-case (2 syllables)	
revolution	re-vo-lu-tion (4 syllables)	
forever	for-ev-er (3 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

I had my first _____ in Hungary in Budapest. It was a long time ago. I started in 1953. It was a very big _____ factory. I made briefcases, purses, and _____ for women and for men. I made many small and large suitcases. I also made nice leather _____.

It was a nice, but a very hard job over there. But I _____ my job. I was a good worker. But later came the bad _____ in 1956. There was a _____. This time was the worst for me because my job ended.

I was sad and unhappy. This time will be a bad _____ for me forever.

Questions

1. What country was Imre from? Find it on the map. What countries is it near?
2. Describe Imre's work in his native country
3. Describe or learn about the Hungarian revolution of 1956

Lesson Three My Hobby

I have a nice hobby. It is soccer. This is a sport that is popular in Europe. I loved the Budapest soccer team. The team is very famous throughout all of Hungary and all over Europe. This team is very dear to me and my family. I remember when I was a very little boy. Every weekend on Saturday or Sunday, I went with my father and godfather to the soccer field. We saw many good games. There were good players. But sometimes I was mad because my soccer team lost too many games. I was always unhappy then. But we went every Saturday or Sunday together because we all liked the players.

Imre Sipos

Words	Syllables	Write Sentence
hobby	ho-bby (2 syllables)	
famous	fa-mous (2 syllables)	
throughout	through-out (2 syllables)	
remember	re-mem-ber (3 syllables)	
weekend	week-end (2 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

I have a nice _____. It is soccer. This is a _____ that is _____ in Europe. I loved the Budapest soccer team. The team is very _____ throughout all of Hungary and all over Europe. This team is very dear to me and my family. I _____ when I was a very little boy. Every _____ on Saturday or Sunday, I went with my father and godfather to the soccer field. We saw many

good _____. There were good players. But sometimes I was _____ because my soccer team lost too many games. I was always _____ then. But we went every Saturday or Sunday together because we all liked the _____.

Questions

1. What do you think it was that Imre found so enjoyable about soccer?
2. What sport or activity do you enjoy?
3. What are some activities you and your family enjoy doing together?

Lesson Four 1994 Elections in Hungary

On May 8th, 1994 and May 29th there were elections in Hungary. The election was a big surprise because the Hungarian Socialist party won the elections and took an absolute majority in parliament. Why did the Hungarian Socialist party win, since five years ago, the communist era had collapsed in Hungary? The Hungarian Democratic Forum won then. After this, the Hungarian Democratic Forum formed a coalition with the Christian Democratic People's Party. The communist era is over and a new democratic era has started. Hungarian people are very happy about this.

But afterwards, there wasn't a good economic program. Inflation grew very fast and a lot of people lost their jobs. Gradually, many people lost trust in the new government and everybody was sad.

People were again waiting for new elections and waiting for a new era and a new government. Now the Socialist Party has won an absolute victory in Hungary. People hope again that this will begin a new era and a good economic program. Gyula Horn became Prime Minister. He believes and promised to help the country and the Hungarian people. He promises that there will be a good economic program and safety in the future.

Imre Sipos

Words	Syllables	Write Sentence
election	e-lec-tion (3 syllables)	
majority	ma-jor-i-ty (4Syllables)	
coalition	co-a-li-tion (4 syllables)	
communist	com-mu-nist (3)	

	syllables)	
democratic	de-mo-cra-tic (4 syllables)	
inflation	in-fla-tion (3 syllables)	
economic	e-co-nom-ic (4 syllables)	
government	gov-er-ment (3 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

On May 8th, 1994 and May 29th there were _____ in Hungary. The election was a big _____ because the Hungarian Socialist party won the elections and took an absolute _____ in parliament. Why did the Hungarian Socialist party win, since five years ago, the _____ era had collapsed in Hungary? The Hungarian Democratic Forum won then. After this, the Hungarian Democratic Forum formed a coalition with the Christian Democratic People's Party. The communist era is over and a new _____ era has started. Hungarian people are very happy about this.

But afterwards, there wasn't a good _____ program. _____ grew very fast and a lot of people lost their _____. Gradually, many people lost _____ in the new government and everybody was _____.

People were again _____ for new elections and waiting for a new era and a new government. Now the Socialist Party has won an absolute _____ in Hungary. People hope again that this will begin a new era and a good _____ program. Gyula Horn became Prime Minister. He believes and promised to help the country and the Hungarian _____. He promises that there will be a good economic program and safety in the _____.

Questions

1. What happened to communism in Hungary?
2. Who replaced them in 1990? What type of government came into power?
3. What happened in 1994? What type of government came to power?
4. Why?
5. What is socialism? How does it differ from capitalism?
6. Who is Gyula Horn and what did he want to do?

Lesson Five

My Life and Career in Odessa

I grew up in Odessa in Russia. I lived there almost all my life except during World War II when I moved to the Urals. Odessa is a big city. It has one-and-a-half million people. Odessa has much industry. It has plants for making precision tools. It also has ports along side the Black Sea and is a major center for trade and commerce.

Odessa also has colleges or institutions for specialized study in such areas as medicine, architecture, pharmaceutical studies, teaching and several polytechnical institutes. Odessa is also a major center for medical treatment.

Odessa is also a major cultural center. It has many theaters, museums and cinemas and other cultural attractions that draw people to this beautiful city on the Black Sea.

I went to the University of Odessa in 1938. I studied for only three years because of World War II. Later, I continued my education in the Urals at the University of Svezdloosk. I finished my education in 1944. I got the equivalent of a master's degree in physics and mathematics.

For two years I worked as a scientific researcher at the Ural Polytechnical Institute. At the end of 1945, I went back to Odessa. I worked for a couple of years as a scientific researcher at the Technology Institute. I also worked in Moldavia for a couple of years in a home for sick children. In 1950 I became a physics and math teacher in high school. I kept that position for 25 years, until 1975 when I retired.

Fanya

Words	Syllables	Write Sentence
except	ex-cept (2 syllables)	
precision	pre-cis-ion (3 syllables)	
commerce	com-merce (2 syllables)	
architecture	arch-i-tec-ture (4 syllables)	
pharmaceuticals	Pharm-a-ceu-ti-cals (5 syllables)	
researcher	re-search-er (3 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

I grew up in Odessa in Russia. I lived there almost all my life _____ during World War II when I _____ to the Urals. Odessa is a big city. It has one-and-a-half _____ people. Odessa has much _____. It has plants for making precision _____. It also has ports along side the Black Sea and is a major center for _____ and commerce.

Odessa also has colleges or institutions for specialized _____ in such areas as medicine, architecture, pharmaceutical studies, teaching and several polytechnical institutes. Odessa is also a major center for _____ treatment.

Odessa is also a major cultural center. It has many theaters, museums and cinemas and other cultural _____ that draw people to this beautiful city on the Black Sea.

I went to the University of Odessa in 1938. I studied for only three years because of World War II. Later, I continued my _____ in the Urals at the University of Svezdloosk. I finished my education in 1944. I got the equivalent of a _____ degree in physics and mathematics.

For two years I worked as a _____ researcher at the Ural Polytechnical Institute. At the end of 1945, I went back to Odyessa. I worked for a couple of years as a scientific _____ at the Technology Institute. I also worked in Moldavia for a couple of years in a home for _____ children. In 1950 I became a physics and math _____ in high school. I kept that position for 25 years, until 1975 when I _____.

Questions

1. How does Fanya describe Odessa? What does she identify as its major characteristics?
2. Find Odessa on the map. Look it up on the Internet if you can.
3. What did she study in school?
4. Describe Fanya's career path?
5. What stands out for you as you think about the way her career developed?
6. What picture do you get of Fanya in reading her story?

Lesson Six My Life History

I was born in 1931 in Ukraine, formerly a republic of the U.S.S. R. During the Soviet period my family was persecuted because we disagreed with the communist political philosophy of the Soviet Union. Also, my two uncles were arrested by the KGB, the Soviet security apparatus.

My mother was a teacher from 1922-1931. She worked in a Ukrainian children's orphanage with children who lost their parents during the 1917 Revolution and subsequent Civil War. At that time the American people helped the children by providing clothes, food, books, and toys. Later, my mother explained the American assistance to the children. She also told about the arrest of innocent people and the truth about American help.

In 1946 my mother was arrested as a political dissident. She was sentenced for seven years to Karaganda, Kazakstan, a former republic of the U.S.S.R. in central Asia. I was left alone and had to work hard to survive with the help of my Aunt Xsenja. My family was constantly persecuted as political dissidents in the U.S.S.R.

For this reason we received permission from the American government to immigrate there in 1992. It is a free country in comparison to the undemocratic Soviet system.

Now my daughter has a job in a nursing home and speaks English well. My mother is 99 and she is very active in her day care center.

My wife and I have SSI (Supplemental Social Security Income) and we are improving our English at the Salvation Army Senior Citizens Center. I also study English at the Capital Community College in Hartford, CT.

My son George, works in a photo lab and does not have problems with his English.

We are all U.S. citizens. We studied American history to prepare for our immigration test at the Hartford, CT Salvation Army Senior Citizens Center with the help of Mary and Paul. Thank you America! Thank you, Salvation Army!

Eduard Priymets

Words	Syllables	Write Sentence
republic	Re-pub-lic (3 syllables)	
persecute	per-se-cute (3 syllables)	
philosophy	phil-os-o-phy (4 syllables)	
orphanage	or-phan-age (3 syllables)	
dissident	Dis-si-dent (3 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

I was born in 1931 in Ukraine, formerly a _____ of the U.S.S.R. During the Soviet period my family was _____ because we _____ with the communist political philosophy of the Soviet Union. Also, my two uncles were _____ by the KGB, the Soviet security apparatus.

My mother was a teacher from 1922-1931. She worked in a Ukrainian children's _____ with children who lost their parents

during the 1917 Revolution and subsequent Civil War. At that time the American people helped the children by providing clothes, food, books, and toys. Later, my _____ explained the American assistance to the children. She also told about the _____ of innocent people and the truth about American help.

In 1946 my mother was arrested as a political _____. She was sentenced for seven years to Karaganda, Kazakstan, a former republic of the U.S.S.R. in central Asia. I was left alone and had to _____ hard to survive with the help of my Aunt Xsenja. My family was constantly persecuted as political dissidents in the U.S.S.R.

For this reason we received _____ from the American government to immigrate there in 1992. It is a free country in _____ to the undemocratic Soviet system.

Now my daughter has a job in a _____ home and speaks English well. My mother is 99 and she is very active in her day care center.

My wife and I have SSI (Supplemental Social Security Income) and we are _____ our English at the Salvation Army Senior Citizens Center. I also study English at the Capital Community College in Hartford, CT.

My son George, works in a photo lab and does not have problems with his English.

We are all U.S. citizens. We studied _____ history to prepare for our immigration test at the Hartford, CT Salvation Army Senior Citizens Center with the help of Mary and Paul. Thank you America! Thank you, Salvation Army!

Questions

1. What was political life like in the Soviet Union during the 1930s and 1940s?
2. Describe Eduard's mother's experiences in the Soviet Union.
3. How does Eduard compare the Soviet Union to the United States?
4. How would you compare and contrast life in the United States with life in your native country?
5. What do you find most interesting about Eduard's story?

Lesson Seven Our Native Place



Our native place is the favorite place for most of us. It is associated in our memory with our mother's tender smile and our father's clever words, with vague recollection of our first achievements, which look so small now, but seemed to be so important then. The sun was then always shining, the birds were singing, the grass was permanently green and the flowers were blooming. The backyard was so vast and interesting, and the whole neighborhood was so beautiful. All was clean and bright, as clean and bright as were our souls and dreams at that time. And it does not matter that other people can see this place in a quite different manner. It remains for us still the same, because it is our native place.

Stephan I. Ladyzhynsky

Words	Syllables	Write Sentence
associate	a-soc-i-ate (4 syllables)	
tender	ten-der (2 syllables)	
vague	vague (one syllable)	
recollection	re-col-lec-tion (4 syllables)	
achievement	a-chieve-ment (3 syllables)	
permanently	Perm-an-ent-ly (4 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

Our native place is the _____ place for most of us. It is _____ in our memory with our mother's _____ smile and our father's clever words, with _____ recollection of our first _____, which look so small now, but seemed to be so important then. The sun was then always shining, the birds were singing, the grass was permanently _____ and the flowers were _____. The backyard was so vast and interesting, and the whole _____ was so beautiful. All was clean and bright, as clean and bright as were our souls and _____ at that time. And it does not matter that other people can see this place in a quite _____ manner. It remains for us still the same, because it is our native _____.

Questions

1. Describe Stephan's native place.
2. What do you think was childhood like for Stephan based on his recollections?
3. Underline all of the images of nature that Stephan describes. What do these images convey to you?
4. Discuss the following line: "All was clean and bright, as clean and bright as were our souls and dreams at that time." What do the images convey to you?
5. What do you think Stephan's native place means to him now?

Lesson Eight My Biography

My name is Lavzar Grabarnik. I was born October 22, 1920 in New Ukrania which is near Odyssa, South of Kiev. My mother's name was Clara. She died in 1968 from diabetes at the age of 72. My father's name was Chaim. He died in 1922 at the age of 27 from cholera.

My first wife's name was Larina. She was born August 23, 1925 and died in 1986.

My second wife is Lena Krant and she is here with me. We were married in 1990 in Moscow. Her husband and I were friends for 30 years. Lena's husband died in 1987. I have one daughter, one granddaughter and one great-granddaughter.

In 1988 my daughter and grand-daughter emigrated to the United States of America. After they left, I missed them very much. Now they are working as programmers.

When I was a child my mother married for the second time. She was his third wife. The family was very big. He had two children from his first wife, the second wife already had a boy, and when my mother married him she already had two children, my sister Luydmila and me. Then my mother had another baby girl, Fege. We lived in a room. My stepfather was a barber. My mother took care of the children.

I helped every day and every night. I brought water, I cut wood for the fire, I took care of the pig and the rabbits. I had to feed them and clean up after them out in the yard. The toilet was outside. To bathe we went to the bathhouse once a week.

Because I was so young when my father died and my mother was 23 years old, my grandparents helped bring me up.

I started school at eight years old and finished at 18. I always got good grades, fours and fives. Then I went to military school in Kiev. I studied military science and communications, like the telephone and telegraph for the army. Then I went to Stalingrad as an officer. It was in 1940.

I taught all military subjects to my group. Stalingrad is a big city on the Volga River. The old name is Czaritzan and the new name is Volgograd.

In June 1941 the Germans bombed Kiev and Minsk. I went to Moscow and worked for the War Department for five months and then I was sent to the front. I was 21 years old and was a lieutenant.

My step-brother was a military officer. When the Germans took the Ukraine, he went back home. Germans became neighbors and the Ukrainian neighbors showed the Germans where the Jews lived and my brother was killed in New Ukraine.

On the front we didn't have weapons. We had to take our weapons from the dead German soldiers. War on the front was difficult and dangerous. I was very lucky. With all the butchery, I was never wounded.

In 1945, I came back with a lot of military decorations and resumed teaching in military school for five years. I met my first wife in Moscow in 1948.

In 1955, I was demobilized from the army with the rank of lieutenant colonel.

After my career in the army, I took a civilian job with the Central Telegraph in Moscow. I went back to school at night and earned a degree in mechanical Engineering. Between working and studying, I barely had time to sleep.

On September 27, 1992 we emigrated to the United States of America and arrived in West Hartford. We are very happy. We have passed the exam for citizenship, assigned American passports and were ready to vote for an American President.

Lazar Grabarnik

Words	Syllables	Write Sentence
diabetes	di-a-be-tes (4 syllables)	
cholera	chol-er-a (3 syllables)	
decoration	de-cor-a-tion (4 syllables)	
lieutenant	lieu-ten-ant (3 syllables)	
emigrate	em-i-grate (3 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

My name is Lavzar Grabarnik. I was born October 22, 1920 in New Ukrania which is near Odyssa, South of Kiev. My mother's name was Clara. She died in 1968 from _____ at the age of 72. My father's name was Chaim. He died in 1922 at the age of 27 from cholera.

My first wife's name was Larina. She was born August 23, 1925 and _____ in 1986.

My second wife is Lena Krant and she is here with me. We were married in 1990 in Moscow. Her husband and I were friends for 30

years. Lena's husband died in 1987. I have one daughter, one granddaughter and one great-granddaughter.

In 1988 my daughter and grand-daughter _____ to the United States of America. After they left, I missed them very much. Now they are working as programmers.

When I was a child my mother _____ for the second time. She was his third wife. The family was very big. He had two children from his first wife, the second wife already had a boy, and when my mother married him she already had two _____ my sister Luydmila and me. Then my mother had another baby girl, Fege. We lived in a room. My stepfather was a barber. My _____ took care of the children.

I helped every day and every night. I brought water, I cut wood for the _____, I took care of the pig and the rabbits. I had to feed them and clean up after them out in the _____. The toilet was outside. To bathe we went to the bathhouse once a week.

Because I was so young when my father died and my mother was 23 years old, my grandparents helped bring me up.

I started school at eight years old and finished at 18. I always got good grades, fours and fives. Then I went to _____ school in Kiev. I studied military science and communications, like the telephone and _____ for the army. Then I went to Stalingrad as an officer. It was in 1940.

I taught all military subjects to my group. Stalingrad is a big city on the Volga River. The old name is Czaritzan and the new name is Volgograd.

In June 1941 the _____ bombed Kiev and Minsk. I went to Moscow and worked for the War Department for five months and then I was sent to the front. I was 21 years old and was a _____.

My step-brother was a military officer. When the Germans took the Ukraine, he went back home. Germans became neighbors and the Ukrainian _____ showed the Germans where the Jews lived and my brother was killed in New Ukraine.

On the front we didn't have _____. We had to take our weapons from the dead German soldiers. War on the front was difficult and _____. I was very lucky. With all the butchery, I was never wounded.

In 1945, I came back with a lot of military _____ and resumed teaching in military school for five years. I met my first wife in Moscow in 1948.

In 1955, I was demobilized from the army with the rank of lieutenant colonel.

After my career in the army, I took a _____ job with the Central Telegraph in Moscow. I went back to school at night and earned a degree in mechanical Engineering. Between working and _____, I barely had time to sleep.

On September 27, 1992 _____ to the United States of America and arrived in West Hartford. We are very happy. We have passed the exam for citizenship, assigned American passports and were ready to _____ for an American President.

Questions

1. Outline the main events of Lazar's life.
2. Find Kiev on the map. Look up Kiev on the Internet if you can.

3. Describe Lazar's childhood experience. What stands out for you as you think about his life as a young boy?
4. What was World War II like as Lazar describes it? What do you think it was like for the Russian people?
5. Click on this link for a description of the Battle of Stalingrad (<http://www.thehistorychannel.co.uk/classroom/gcse/staling.htm>).
6. What did Lazar do after he left the army?
7. How old was Lazar when he emigrated to the United States?

Lesson Nine

Our Family History

I want to tell you a story about my husband's life. Michael was born in Minsk, the capitol of Belaruss, a former Soviet Union Republic. He had a large family: parents, grandparents, a brother, a sister with her family and many other relatives. Michael was 17 years old when World War II started in USSR.

Everyone who could walk left the city because Minsk was very near Germany. His family could not leave because the grandparents were old, the mother was sick and the sister had a little baby. His mother asked Michael and his older brother to leave the city. The brother Aron walked for a short time and decided to go back with his family. Michael had a very hard time without any food and clothing. A year later he went into the Soviet Army and shortly thereafter he was at the front fighting the advancing Nazi-German armies. He was at the front for two years and ten months and was wounded four times. When he came back to Minsk nobody of his family was alive. All of them were killed in Jewish ghettos. He met his neighbors who came back from different evacuation exile locations and lived at their apartment for a month.

Before the war, Michael and his family had a three-bedroom apartment, which was occupied by different people during the war. After the war, Michael received orders from the local court to occupy one room in his former apartment. Much of the city of Minsk was destroyed during the war and housing was now very scarce.

In November 1946 we got married and lived in this one room with my mother and two children for 15 years. We were on the waiting list for eight years to receive a public apartment and in 1963 we got a one bedroom apartment for four people. My husband and I were sleeping in the bedroom and our son slept in the living room. We lived in this apartment for 19 years.

Our daughter graduated from the Institute and got married. Then she delivered a son and there were six people in the same apartment. Then our son got married and left us.

In eight years we bought a two-bedroom apartment for our daughter. But the worst was that she couldn't find a better job. There were a few good jobs but no one would hire her because she was a Jew. But Elvina didn't look Jewish. Before she showed her passport everyone was ready to hire her. When they saw her documents they said no, we can't take care of you. After all of this, one time she came home and was hysterical. She cried and said, "It's enough, I don't want to be in this country anymore. We must leave the country. I can't be here any more." We decided to leave. In two years we arrived in America. We are lucky. Our children have jobs they all wanted. We have all we need. And we thank America for all.

God bless America

Mila Metlisky

Words	Syllables	Write Sentence
evacuation	e-vac-u-a-tion (5 syllables)	
deliver	de-li-ver (3 syllables)	
ghetto	ghe-tto (2 syllables)	
occupied	oc-cu-pied (3 syllables)	
enough	e-nough (2 syllables)	
hysterical	hys-ter-i-cal (4 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

I want to tell you a _____ about my husband's life. Michael was _____ in Minsk, the capitol of Belaruss, a former Soviet Union Republic. He had a large family: parents, grandparents, a brother, a sister with her family and many other _____. Michael was 17 years old when World War II started in USSR.

Everyone who could walk left the city _____. Minsk was very near Germany. His family could not leave because the grandparents were _____, the mother was _____ and the sister had a little _____. His mother asked Michael and his older brother to leave the city. The brother Aron walked for a short time and decided to _____ back with his family. Michael had a very hard time without any _____ and clothing. A year later he went into the Soviet Army and shortly thereafter he was at the front fighting the _____ Nazi-German armies. He was at the front for two years and ten months and was _____ four times. When he came back to Minsk _____ of his family was alive. All of them were killed in Jewish _____. He met his _____ who came back from different evacuation exile locations and lived at their apartment for a month.

Before the war, Michael and his family had a three-bedroom _____, which was occupied by different people during the war. After the war, Michael _____ orders from the local court to occupy one room in his former apartment. Much of the city of Minsk was destroyed during the war and _____ was now very scarce.

In November 1946 we got married and I _____ in this one room with my mother and two children for 15 years. We were on the waiting list for eight years to receive a public _____ and in 1963 we got a one-bedroom apartment for four people. My husband and I were _____ in the bedroom and our son slept in the living room. We _____ in this apartment for 19 years.

Our daughter graduated from the Institute and got married. Then she _____ a son and there were six people in the same apartment. Then our son got married and left us.

In eight years we bought a two-bedroom apartment for our daughter. But the worst was that she couldn't find a better _____. There were a few good jobs but no one would hire her because she was a _____. But Elvina didn't look Jewish. Before she showed her _____ everyone was ready to hire her. When they saw her _____ they said no, we can't take care of you. After all of this, one time she came home and was _____. She cried and said, "It's enough, I don't want to be in this _____ anymore. We must leave the country. I can't be here any more." We decided to _____. In two years we _____ in America. We are lucky. Our children have _____ they all wanted. We have all we need. And we thank America for all.

God bless America

Questions

1. Locate Minsk on a map. If possible, do an Internet search of the city and find an article you would like to read.
2. Who is Michael in relationship to the writer?
3. Why did Michael's mother want he and his brother to leave Minsk?
4. What do you know of the Holocaust in Europe during World War II? What are some ways that you can find additional information?
5. What do you know about the role of the Soviet Union in World War II? What are some ways you can find additional information?
6. What leads some groups of people to hate other groups of people?
7. What are some current areas in the world in which certain groups of people who hate other groups of people has recently led or is leading to violence?
8. What role, if any, should other nations play in addressing issues of ethnic group violence?

9. Describe the life of Mila and Michael and their family after World War II.
10. Why did they decide to come to the United States?

Voices from South East Asia
George Demetrion (Editor)
Manager of Community-Based programming
Literacy Volunteers of Greater Hartford

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Lesson One

Lesson Two

Lesson Three

Lesson Four

Lesson Five

Lesson Six

Lesson Seven

Lesson Eight

Lesson Nine

Lesson Ten

Lesson Eleven

Voices from South East Asia
George Demetrion (Editor)
Manager of Community-Based programming
Literacy Volunteers of Greater Hartford

Lesson One

Things are difficult in the U.S. because I cannot speak English and I cannot understand English. I understand more now.

I could not recognize my own address or write my name in English. Now I can, but I still need to improve. I want to study more.

I learned about rights I did not know about. Now I know I have the right to an interpreter (at social security office). This will help me while I learn more English.

Mr. So Van Le
Asian Family Services

Words	Syllables	Write Sentence
difficult	dif-fi-cult (3 syllables)	
because	be-cause (2 syllables)	
understand	un-der-stand (3 syllables)	
recognize	rec-og-nize (3 syllables)	
interpreter	in-ter-pre-ter (4 syllables)	

Unscramble sentences

1. about learned did not know about I rights I.

2. recognize address or write I could in English not name my own my.

Fill in the Blanks

Things are _____ in the U.S. because I cannot _____ English and I cannot _____ English. I understand more now.

I could not _____ my own address or write my name in English. Now I can, but I still need to _____. I want to _____ more.

I learned about _____ I did not know about. Now I know I have the _____ to an interpreter (at social security office). This will help me while I learn more _____.

Questions

1. Why are things difficult for Mr. Lee?
2. What does he recognize now that he didn't recognize before?
3. How important is it to have an interpreter in meetings with social services?
4. What is difficult for you?
5. What can you recognize now in English that you couldn't recognize before?

Lesson Two

I have a problem to remember what I learn in class. But I know that coming to class everyday, I at least learned my rights as a refugee.

I get frustrated when I cannot remember the English word I learned in class. When I come home I ask my grandparents to teach me. I don't think I can use a lot of English skills to do things by myself yet.

But I could do things I could not do before class. I can answer the telephone in English, spell my name and address.

I would like to wish the people that help make this program long life, happiness and God bless all of them.

Ms. Ngo Pham
Asian Family Services

Words	Syllables	Write Sentence
problem	prob-lem (2 syllables)	
everyday	ev-er-y-day (4 syllables)	
frustrated	frus-tra-ted (3 syllables)	
refugee	ref-u-gee (3 syllables)	
remember	re-mem-ber (3 syllables)	
grandchildren	grand-chil-dren (3 syllables)	
appreciate	a-pppre-ci-ate (4 syllables)	
answer	an-swer (2 syllables)	

Unscramble sentences

1. remember what learn I have a to I in class problem

2. spell I telephone address can answer the English, my name and in

Fill in the Blanks

I have a _____ to remember what I learn in class. But I know that _____ to class everyday, I at least learned my rights as a _____.

I get _____ when I cannot remember the English word I learned in class. When I come home I ask my _____ to teach me. I don't think I can use a lot of English skills to do things by _____ yet.

But I could do _____ I could not do before class. I can _____ the telephone in English, spell my name and address.

I would like to wish the _____ that help make this program long life, happiness and God bless all of them.

Questions

1. Do you have a problem remembering what you learned in class?
2. What can you do to help you remember what you learn in class?
3. Who helps Ms. Pham learn English?
4. Who helps you learn English?
5. How does Ms. Pham use English? How do you use English?

Lesson Three

I have a memory problem. It's very hard for me to learn English. I also have a great accent when I speak English, which makes it difficult for people to understand me. I rely strongly on my children and Asian Family Services to help me when I don't understand English or I am having a problem.

Since I studied English I met with many Vietnamese friends. I try to do things by myself or with my friends sometimes. Even though I learned about my rights as a refugee, I don't know how to express them in English.

I saw many Vietnamese have trouble with the police officers because they cannot understand English when the police ask questions. However, Asian Family Services has always helped me and my family when we need help.

Ms. Thuc Hoang
Asian Family Services

Words	Syllables	Write Sentence
memory	mem-or-y (3 syllables)	
accent	ac-cent (2 syllables)	
difficult	dif-fi-cult (3 syllables)	
problem	prob-lem (2 syllables)	
express	ex-press (2 syllables)	
trouble	trou-ble (2 syllables)	

Unscramble Words

1. hard to learn English for me It's very

2. friends myself or I try to do with my sometimes things by

Questions

1. Is it easy for you to remember English?
2. What can you do to help you remember?
3. Who helps Ms. Hoang with English?
4. What trouble do people have if they don't know English?
5. What can they do about it?
6. In what ways does Asian Family Services help?

Lesson Four

When I cannot talk to my doctor, I feel like I am deaf and mute. I do get angry! I had to wait in the office for four hours and they told me to go home and come back with someone who could speak English! This made me cry.

When I go to school I can meet friends and make new friends. I have someone to talk to in my language while I learn some new words every day. I get a lot of caring from Asian Family Services. I am thankful to Vichhyka and all my teachers.

Now I know:

- I have the right to ask.
- I have the right to apply.
- I have the right to request.
- I have the right to DEMAND.

Ms. Sat Nguyen
Asian Family Services

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
deaf	deaf (one syllable)	
mute	mute (one syllable)	
language	lang-uage (2 syllables)	
apply	a-pply (2 syllables)	
request	re-quest (2 syllables)	
demand	de-mand (2 syllables)	

Unscramble sentences

1. doctor when deaf cannot talk to my I feel like I and mute I am

Questions

1. Do you go to an English speaking doctor? If so, how do you communicate?
2. Did you ever have to wait for a long time when you go to an office?
3. Is there anything you can do?
4. What do you have the right to ask for?
5. What do you have the right to apply for?
6. What do you have the right to request?
7. What do you have the right to demand?

Lesson Five

When I was a baby I lived with my grandmother in the village. When I was a child I lived with my parents in the city. Then I went to school. After that time I got married when I was 24 years old in Haiphong. My husband worked in the custom office. From 24 to 32 years old I already had 5 children, one son and four daughters.

In 1954 the communists took over North Vietnam so we had to evacuate to the South Vietnam to Saigon. My husband still worked at the same position. Then in 1972 my husband got sick and died. I had to run businesses and raise my children. All of them got to go to school.

In 1975 the communists took over Saigon, too. And now all my family is in the U.S. except one daughter who lives in France with her husband and two children.

When I first came to the U.S. I was very depressed. I worried about a lot of things, especially for my children. All of them got a job, but at night they all went to school.

Actually, I am very content and happy because all my children got a better job. I have ten grandchildren, all of them go to school. They're all polite. I think they will become good students.

Someday the communists will be gone. I will come back to my country again.

Ms. Ha Tran
Shepherd Park

Word	Syllable	Write Sentence
village	vil-lage (2 syllables)	
office	o-ffice (2 syllables)	
daughter	daugh-ter (2 syllables)	
evacuate	e-vac-u-ate (4 syllables)	
depressed	de-pressed (2 syllables)	
worried	wor-ried (2 syllables)	

Unscramble Sentence

1. I lived was a baby with my I in the village when grandmother

2. depressed I first the U.S. when I was very came to

Fill in the Blanks

When I was a _____ I lived with my grandmother in the village.
 When I was a _____ I lived with my parents in the city. Then I
 went to _____. After that time I got _____ when I was 24
 years old in Haiphong. My husband worked in the custom _____.
 From 24 to 32 years old I already had 5 _____, one son and four
 daughters.

In 1954 the communists took over North Vietnam so we had to _____ to the South Vietnam to Saigon. My husband still worked at the same _____. Then in 1972 my husband got sick and died. I had to run businesses and _____ my children. All of them got to go to _____.

In 1975 the communists _____ _____ Saigon, too. And now all my family is in the U.S. _____ one daughter who lives in France with her husband and two children.

When I first came to the U.S. I was very _____. I worried about a lot of things, especially for my _____. All of them got a job, but at night they all went to school.

Actually, I am very content and happy because all my children got a _____ job. I have ten grandchildren, all of them go to school. They're all polite. I think they will become _____ students.

Someday the communists will be gone. I will come back to my _____ again.

Questions

1. What is life like in a village?
2. What is life like in a city? How is it different than a village?
3. What was Ha's life like when she was in her 20s and 30s?
4. What happened in Vietnam in 1954?
5. What was life like for Ha after her husband died?
6. What happened in Vietnam in 1975?
7. How did Ha feel when she first came to the U.S.? Was that like you felt or not?
8. How does Ha feel now about her life?
9. What would you like to say to Ha in a letter?

Lesson Six

My name is Hung Dinh Tien. I was born in Ha-Long, Quang Yen. Ha-Long is a famous seaport of North Vietnam with wonderful landscapes and marvelous caves. I have three sisters and one brother. In World War II, my family moved to Hoa-Lu, it's the former capital of King Dinh. My parents died in our ancestor's land when my oldest sister was seventeen and I was only a ten-year old child.

After the Geneva Cease Fire Agreement in 1954 between the French and the North Vietnamese Communist Army, we moved to South Vietnam at the same time with more than one million people, most of them Catholics. We lived together in a small house in a refugee camp. A priest adopted me and brought me into the seminary. In two years, I was studying and confusing French, Latin, English, Chinese, and Vietnamese. I became seriously sick, and I had to leave the seminary. During that time, I was working hard and trying to finish high school.

When I was twenty-four years old, the Vietnamese War was devastating the country. I entered into the army. I finished army service school. I became a platoon commander in the Vietnamese Special Forces (Green Berets). In early 1968, there was very violent fighting between the communist regiment and our own Special Forces Company on the Lao-Vietnam frontier. Both sides suffered heavy losses. I felt moved so much by this war. I wrote a war report titled "The Hill of the Fight to Death." I won a prize among one hundred correspondents. Then I served for four years on the staff of the Vietnamese Special Forces Magazine.

During eight years in the Vietnamese Army, I attended parachute training and I was an honorary member of the U.S. Army Green Beret Fifth Group. After I studied in the Political Warfare College, I became the Chief of Political Warfare for two years with the rank of Captain. I was also a member of the Writers and Artists of the South Vietnamese Army Association.

I was fighting under the glorious banner of freedom. On April 30, 1975, the North Vietnamese Communists attacked and occupied the South Vietnam. I will never forget that distressing day. Everything collapsed in hopelessness. I was a Prisoner of War (P.O.W.) for eight years. The communists treated prisoners very cruelly. A lot of them died after a few years of imprisonment. Then, I was freed and I went home with a withered body and a heavy soul. I continued to work very hard in poor living conditions and spent long days waiting for something better.

After many years of discussions about P.O.W.'s and M.I.A.'s [those Missing in Action] between the U.S. and the Communist government, my family finally came to the U.S. on July 1991 as political refugees.

Our trip lasted one week and we had deep worries. We flew over half way around the world. We came to the United States, the center of the free world.

Then, we had to face a lot of difficult first steps living in a very different culture. I always try my best to live in this country, but it is very difficult. After two years of studying English, I decided to attend a nurse's aid program. I graduated after five months of studying and fortunately, I got a job in a convalescent home. After four months of difficult training, I became a full-time employee.

I'm working hard for my living and I'm participating in American life. I won't be affected by an inferiority complex as a refugee because I'm making my contribution to this country. On my days off, I write for some Vietnamese magazines. I want to share a few experiences with my community about the communist regime. I hope one day my English will be better so I can translate my journal into English to help people understand what communism is like.

Now, I'm recalling the past events in my life with happy and unhappy memories. Eastern philosophy asks: "To speak of oneself, is that worthwhile or not?" I'm Vietnamese. I think like an Eastern person, although I'm living in the U.S. Vietnam and the United States are different in many of the questions they ask. For that reason, the East and West will never be united.

Mr. Hung Dien Tien
Arbor Street Reading Center

Word	Syllable	Write Sentence
seaport	sea-port (2 syllables)	
landscapes	land-scapes (2 syllables)	
marvelous	mar-ve-lous (3 syllables)	
refugee	re-fu-gee (3 syllables)	
seriously	se-ri-ous-ly (4 syllables)	
suffered	su-ffered (2 syllables)	
distressing	dis-tres-sing (3 syllables)	
collapsed	co-llap-sed (3 syllables)	
fortunately	for-tu-nat-ely (4 syllables)	
contribution	con-tri-bu-tion (4 syllables)	

Unscramble Sentences

1. My when my died a ten-year old child in our ancestor's land oldest sister was seventeen and I was only parents

2. English nurse's aid after studying, I decided to attend a program two years of

Fill in the Blanks

My name is Hung Dinh Tien. I was _____ in Ha-Long, Quang Yen. Ha-Long is a famous seaport of North Vietnam with wonderful landscapes and marvelous caves. I have three _____ and one brother. In World War II, my family _____ to Hoa-Lu, it's the former capital of King Dinh. My parents _____ in our ancestor's land when my oldest sister was seventeen and I was only a ten-year old child.

After the Geneva Cease Fire Agreement in 1954 between the French and the North Vietnamese Communist Army, we _____ to South Vietnam at the same time with more than one million _____, most of them Catholics. We _____ together in a small house in a refugee camp. A priest adopted me and brought me into the seminary. In two years, I was _____ and confusing French, Latin, English, Chinese, and Vietnamese. I became seriously _____, and I had to leave the seminary. During that time, I was working hard and trying to _____ high school.

When I was twenty-four years old, the Vietnamese War was _____ the country. I _____ into the army. I finished army

service school. I became a platoon commander in the Vietnamese Special Forces (Green Berets). In early 1968, there was very violent _____ between the communist regiment and our own Special Forces Company on the Lao-Vietnam frontier. Both sides suffered heavy _____. I felt moved so much by this war. I wrote a war report titled "The Hill of the Fight to Death." I won a prize among one hundred correspondents. Then I served for four years on the staff of the Vietnamese Special Forces Magazine.

During eight years in the Vietnamese Army, I _____ parachute training and I was an honorary member of the U.S. Army Green Beret Fifth Group. After I studied in the Political Warfare College, I became the Chief of Political Warfare for two years with the rank of Captain. I was also a member of the Writers and Artists of the South Vietnamese Army Association.

I was fighting under the glorious banner of freedom. On April 30, 1975, the North Vietnamese Communists attacked and _____ the South Vietnam. I will never forget that distressing day. Everything _____ in hopelessness. I was a Prisoner of War (P.O.W.) for eight years. The communists treated prisoners very _____. A lot of them died after a few years of _____. Then, I was freed and I went home with a withered body and a heavy soul. I continued to work very hard in poor _____ conditions and spent long days waiting for something better.

After many years of discussions about P.O.W.'s and M.I.A.'s [those Missing in Action] between the U.S. and the Communist government, my family finally came to the U.S. on July 1991 as political _____.

Our trip lasted one week and we had deep worries. We flew over half way around the _____. We came to the United States, the center of the free world.

Then, we had to face a lot of difficult first steps living in a very _____ culture. I always try my best to live in this country, but it is very difficult. After two years of studying English, I decided to attend a nurse's aid program. I graduated after five months of studying, and fortunately, I got a job in a _____ home. After four months of difficult training, I became a full-time employee.

I'm working hard for my living and I'm _____ in American life. I won't be affected by an _____ complex as a refugee because I'm making my contribution to this _____. On my days off, I write for some Vietnamese magazines. I want to share a few experiences with my community about the _____ regime. I hope one day my English will be better so I can translate my journal into English to help people understand what communism is like.

Now, I'm recalling the past events in my life with happy and unhappy memories. Eastern philosophy asks: "To speak of oneself, is that worthwhile or not?" I'm Vietnamese. I think like an Eastern person, although I'm living in the U.S. Vietnam and the United States are _____ in many of the questions they ask. For that reason, the East and West will never be united.

Questions

1. What happened to Hung and his family after 1954? How do you think their life changed?
2. What kind of education did Hung have? How important do you think education was to him? How can you tell?
3. What did Hung do during the Vietnam War? What do you think he thought about the war? How can you tell?
4. What happened to Hung after the war?
5. What kind of job did Hung get once he got to the United States?
6. How does his job help Hung to make a contribution to life in the United States?

7. What else does Hung do in addition to work?
8. What are his hopes and dreams
9. Name at least three ways that your life is similar to Hung's
10. Name at least three ways that your life is different than Hung's
11. In what ways do eastern people think differently than western people?
12. If you were going to speak to Hung or write a letter, what would you like to say?

Lesson Seven

I like living in the United States. It's really a beautiful country. It's one of the biggest countries in the world. In addition the weather is very special and different than weather in my country.

The United States has four distinct seasons: winter, spring, summer, and fall. In fact, the weather isn't always good. Winter is usually cold and wet. My country is very hot in comparison. My least favorite season is winter. However, when spring has set in, I feel happy because it's really nice. It is usually cold and sunny. Somedays it drizzles, but turns fine later in the afternoon and there isn't a cloud in the sky. Moreover, the trees begin to shoot on the branches, which were without leaves.

The flowers open with many bright colors. The scene before us is beautiful beyond description. Whenever the weather is like this, my family likes to be outside on the weekend. We often go to park or playground for my children to frolic. Those places have many people on picnics or taking in the fresh air. I think the birds and beasts like this season, too. The butterflies hover above the flowers, the birds fly from tree to tree. I think all people in the whole world love spring. The trees and animals of nature all are joyful in this season.

The weather of the United States has four seasons but spring is my favorite season. The spring made this country more beautiful. Do you agree with me?

Ms. Lien Tran
Arbor Street Reading Center

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
distinct	dis-tinct (2 syllables)	
favorite	fa-vo-rite (3 syllables)	
description	de-scrip-tion (3 syllables)	
butterflies	bu-tter-flies (3 syllables)	
hover	ho-ver (2 syllables)	

Unscramble sentences

1. my season least winter favorite is

2. playground for my we often go frolic to park or children to

Fill in the Blanks

I like _____ in the United States. It's really a _____ country. It's one of the biggest countries in the _____. In addition the weather is very special and different than weather in my _____.

The United States has four distinct _____: winter, spring, summer, and fall. In fact, the weather isn't always _____. Winter is usually cold and wet. My country is very _____ in comparison. My least favorite season is winter. However, when spring has set in, I feel happy because it's really nice. It is usually cold and sunny. Somedays it drizzles, but turns fine later in the _____ and there isn't a

cloud in the _____. Moreover, the trees begin to shoot on the branches, which were without _____.

The flowers open with many bright _____. The scene before us is beautiful beyond description. Whenever the weather is like this, my family likes to be outside on the weekend. We often go to _____ or playground for my children to frolic. Those places have many people on picnics or taking in the fresh air. I think the birds and beasts like this _____, too. The butterflies hover above the flowers, the birds fly from tree to tree. I think all people in the whole world love spring. The trees and animals of nature all are joyful in this _____.

The weather of the United States has four seasons but spring is my favorite season. The spring made this country more beautiful. Do you _____ with me?

Questions

1. How is the weather in Lien's country different than the weather in the United States?
2. What season does Lien like the least? Why do you think that is so?
3. What does she think about spring?
4. How does she describe spring? Pick out some of the words.
5. What images of spring come into your mind as you read Lien's description of spring?
6. What is your favorite season? How would you describe it?
7. What activities do you like to do in each of the season? List three for each season

◆ Winter

(a)

(b)

(c)

- ◆ Spring
(a)

- (b)

- (c)

- ◆ Summer
(a)

- (b)

- (c)

- ◆ Fall
(a)

- (b)

- (c)

Lesson Eight

"Father deadday is as important as three New Year festival days."
Vietnamese proverb

Americans celebrate a person's birthday, only. In Vietnam we celebrate both the person's birthday and deadday. We celebrate the birthday the same way as Americans. We celebrate the deadday on the day a person has died, year after year.

On the day before the celebration, a family member organizes the deadday by making preparations at the ancestral home of the dead person. The home is decorated inside and around the yard. Fresh flowers, candles, incense, and fruit decorate the altar. Meat, vegetables, rice, wine, and beer are bought for the deadday party. Friends, neighbors, and relatives are invited.

If the family is Catholic, they attend mass at a church near the ancestral home in the early morning of the deadday. The priest prays for the person's soul that they are celebrating.

After mass, they go to the ancestor's house. They eat breakfast, drink tea, or coffee. Everyone works together to cook the food for the deadday party. Some people put tables and the chairs together so that everyone who attends the party can sit to eat and drink comfortably. They also put glasses, bowls, chopsticks, and spoons on the tables. Glasses are filled with wine, beer, or soda. When the food is prepared it is brought out to the tables. Everyone is invited to eat and drink together. The guests talk about many things, especially about the person they are celebrating.

At the end of the deadday party, everyone goes to the cemetery to visit the tomb and pray. They burn incense and put flowers on top of the tomb.

My country has this custom. We think it is very important because it allows all the relatives in the family to get to know one another. Now that I am living in America, my family is trying to keep this custom.

Mr. Cap Nguyen
Arbor Street Reading Center

Word	Syllable	Write Sentence
celebrate	cel-e-brate (3 syllables)	
preparations	prep-ar-a-tions (4 syllables)	
decorated	de-co-ra-ted (4 syllables)	
neighbors	neigh-bors (2 syllables)	
cemetery	ce-me-ter-y (4 syllables)	

Unscramble Sentences

1. day a person we celebrate the year deadday on the has died, after year

2. together so some people put tables and the chairs eat and drink that comfortably everyone who attends the party can sit to

Fill in the Blanks

"Father deadday is as important as three New Year festival days."
Vietnamese proverb

Americans _____ a person's birthday, only. In Vietnam we celebrate both the person's _____ and deadday. We celebrate the birthday the same way as Americans. We celebrate the deadday on the day a person has _____, year after year.

On the day before the celebration, a family member organizes the deadday by making _____ at the ancestral home of the dead person. The home is decorated inside and around the _____. Fresh flowers, candles, incense, and fruit _____ the altar. Meat, vegetables, rice, wine, and beer are bought for the deadday party. Friends, neighbors, and relatives are _____.

If the family is Catholic, they attend _____ at a church near the ancestral home in the early morning of the deadday. The priest prays for the person's _____ that they are celebrating.

After mass, they go to the _____ house. They eat breakfast, drink tea, or coffee. Everyone works together to cook the food for the deadday _____. Some people put tables and the chairs together so that everyone who attends the party can sit to eat and drink comfortably. They also _____ glasses, bowls, chopsticks, and spoons on the tables. Glasses are filled with wine, beer, or soda. When the food is _____ it is brought out to the tables. Everyone is invited to eat and drink together. The guests talk about many things, especially about the person they are _____.

At the end of the deadday party, everyone goes to the cemetery to _____ the tomb and pray. They burn _____ and put flowers on top of the tomb.

My country has this _____. We think it is very important because it allows all the _____ in the family to get to know one another. Now that I am _____ in America, my family is trying to keep this custom.

Questions

1. What is the Deadday?
2. Do you like the idea of celebrating it?
3. Why do you think some cultures have a Deadday celebration? What might this say about their culture?
4. What holidays did you celebrate in your country?
5. Think about one holiday that you especially liked that you celebrated in your country? Describe how you celebrate it.
6. Which holidays do you celebrate in the United States? Which ones do you enjoy the most? Why

Lesson Nine

The Generation Gaps in Vietnam

Families around the world can be classified as traditional or modern. Both types have generation gaps. Vietnam, like most developing countries, has a traditional family structure and there are some problems between the generations.

Children and their parents always live under one roof even after they get married. Mothers are usually at home, so they have time to bring up and educate their children from the time they are born until they are grown up. Parents advise children what school they should attend and what job they should choose.

Adults force their children to obey them, because they have more experience in living. Sometimes teenagers don't want to accept their parents' ideas. They expect their parents to discuss important problems together before making a final decision. When a teenager grows up and gets married, his wife or her husband often lives with his or her parents.

Sometimes young people have conflicts with in-laws. Married people and their parents often have different ideas about how to take care of and educate their children. Often they negotiate with each other. Through such give and take the generations can learn to live peacefully together. Married people hope they can earn enough money to buy their own house, so they can live independently.

The generation gap is always present in each family. It is the responsibility of everyone in the family to solve this problem.

Mr. Canh Nguyen (Cap Nguyen's son)
Arbor Street Reading Center

Word	Syllable	Write Sentence
traditional	tra-di-ti-o-nal (5 syllables)	
generation	gen-er-a-tion (4 syllables)	
usually	u-su-a-ly (4 syllables)	
decision	de-ci-sion (3 syllables)	
negotiate	ne-go-ti-ate (4 syllables)	
peacefully	peace-ful-ly (3 syllables)	

Unscramble sentence

1. traditional family Vietnam, like most countries, has and there are some problems between the generations developing a structure

2. school they parents advise what should and children what job should choose attend they

Fill in the Blanks

Families around the _____ can be classified as traditional or modern. Both types have _____ gaps. Vietnam, like most developing countries, has a _____ family structure and there are some problems between the generations.

Children and their _____ always live under one roof even after they get married. Mothers are usually at _____, so they have time to bring up and educate their children from the time they are born until they are grown up. Parents advise children what _____ they should attend and what job they should choose.

Adults force their _____ to obey them, because they have more experience in living. Sometimes teenagers don't want to _____ their parents' ideas. They expect their parents to _____ important problems together before making a final decision. When a teenager grows up and gets _____ his wife or her husband often lives with his or her parents.

Sometimes young people have _____ with in-laws. Married people and their parents often have different _____ about how to take care of and educate their children. Often they _____ with each other. Through such give and take the _____ can learn to live peacefully together. Married people hope they can _____ enough money to buy their own house, so they can live independently.

The generation gap is always present in each _____. It is the responsibility of _____ in the family to solve this problem.

Questions

1. What do we mean by traditional values? Name at least three traditional values:

(a)

(b)

(c)

2. What do we mean by modern values? Name at least three modern values:

(a)

(b)

(c)

3. In what ways did your values change once you came to the United States? How do you explain this?

4. In what ways have your values remained the same?

5. Why do immigrant parents and children see things in different ways?

6. What should happen in families when values conflict?

7. How important is talking it over for resolving problems between the generations?

8. How hard or easy is it for family members to talk things over and work problems out?

Lesson Ten

Autobiography of Ha Tran

When I was a baby I lived with my grandmother in the village. When I was a child I lived with my parents in the city. Then I went to school. After that time I got married when I was 24 years old in Haiphong. My husband worked in the custom office. From 24 to 32 years old I already had 5 children, one son and four daughters.

In 1954 the communists took over North Vietnam so we had to evacuate to the South Vietnam to Saigon. My husband still worked at the same position. Then in 1972 my husband got sick and died. I had to run businesses and raise my children. All of them got to go to school.

In 1975 the communists took over Saigon, too. And now all my family is in the U.S. except one daughter who lives in France with her husband and two children.

When I first came to the U.S. I was very depressed, I worried about a lot of things, especially for my children. All of them got a job, but at night they all went to school.

Actually, I am very content and happy because all my children got a better job. I have ten grandchildren, all of them go to school. They're all polite. I think they will become good students.

Someday the communists will be gone. I will come back to my country again.

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
position	po-si-tion (3 syllables)	
business	Bus-i-ness (3 syllables)	
raise	Raise (one syllable)	
especially	e-spec-i-al-ly (5 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

When I was a _____ I lived with my grandmother in the village. When I was a child I lived with my parents in the city. Then I went to school. After that time I got _____ when I was 24 years old in Haiphong. My _____ worked in the custom office. From 24 to 32 years old I already had 5 children, one son and four daughters.

In 1954 the _____ took over North Vietnam so we had to evacuate to the South Vietnam to Saigon. My husband still worked at the same _____. Then in 1972 my husband got _____ and died. I had to run _____ and raise my children. All of them got to go to school.

In 1975 the communists took over Saigon, too. And now all my family is in the U.S. except one _____ who lives in France with her _____ and two children.

When I first came to the U.S. I was very _____, I worried about a lot of things, _____ for my children. All of them got a job, but at night they all went to school.

Actually, I am very _____ and happy because all my children got a better job. I have ten _____, all of them go to school. They're all polite. I think they will become good students.

Someday the _____ will be gone. I will come back to my country again.

Questions

1. In what region of Vietnam did Ha grow up?
2. What happened in that region and what did Ha and her family do?
3. What was life like in Saigon for Ha?
4. What happened in Saigon in 1975?
5. What was life like for Ha in the United States when she first came?
6. How does she describe her life now?

Lesson Eleven
A Vietnam Fairy Tale
Ha Tran

"My grandmother told me this story over seventy years ago."

The stepmother was cruel, the family included three people. Their children's names were Tam, Cam and a stepmother of Tam. After Cam was born their father died. Tam had to work at home. It was hard for her. Her stepmother treated her like a servant. Her sister Cam went to school and went shopping to buy whatever she wanted. She didn't buy Tam anything. Tam wore clothing like rags. One day in the town where they lived, there was a festival every family could come to enjoy, including the king's family. The stepmother and Cam dressed up pretty and went to the party. Tam was without new clothes. She stayed home, was very sad, and burst into tears.

Suddenly, a beautiful lady appeared. She introduced herself. "I'm a fairy godmother. I could help you go to the party." She prepared beautiful things and she wore these to the party, especially the pair of slippers. Tam was happy and went to the party. The prince looked at her. He said, "Oh, very pretty girl!" and he asked her to dance with him.

They danced for a long time. When she heard the clock tick 1 a.m. it was too late. Tam worried if her stepmother came home without her she would be punished and hurt her. So Tam ran away.

On the way home she dropped one of the slippers, but she didn't know that. The prince had fallen in love with her. He ran after Tam, he couldn't find her. He found only one of her slippers. After that day he sent a messenger throughout the land to find the girl. Which one fit the slipper the prince would marry. A lot of girls tried it, but no one put on it. Finally Tam tried it and it fit perfectly. They got married and lived happily ever for ever.

Word	Syllables	Write Sentence
stepmother	Step-mother (2 syllables)	
cruel	cru-el (2 syllables)	
servant	ser-vant (2 syllables)	
festival	fes-ti-val (3 syllables)	
appeared	a-ppeared (2 syllables)	
slippers	slip-pers (2 syllables)	
messenger	mes-sen-ger (3 syllables)	

Fill in the Blanks

The _____ was cruel, the family included three people. Their _____ names were Tam, Cam and a stepmother of Tam. After Cam was born their _____ died. Tam had to work at _____. It was hard for her. Her stepmother treated her like a _____. Her sister Cam went to school and went _____ to buy whatever she wanted. She didn't buy Tam anything. Tam wore _____ like rags. One day in the town where they lived, there was a _____ every family could come to enjoy, including the king's family. The stepmother and Cam dressed up _____ and went to the party. Tam was without _____ clothes. She stayed home, was very _____, and burst into tears.

Suddenly, a beautiful lady _____. She _____ herself. "I'm a _____ godmother. I could help you _____ to the party." She prepared _____ things and she wore these to the party, especially the pair of slippers. Tam was _____ and went to the

party. The prince looked at her. He said, "Oh, very pretty girl" and he asked her to _____ with him.

They danced for a long _____. When she heard the clock tick 1 a.m. it was too late. Tam worried if her stepmother came home without her she would be _____ and hurt her. So Tam _____ away.

On the way home she _____ one of the slippers, but she didn't know that. The prince had _____ in love with her. He ran after Tam, he couldn't _____ her. He found only one of her _____. After that day he sent a _____ throughout the land to find the girl. Which one fit the slipper the prince would _____. A lot of girls tried it, but no one _____ on it. Finally Tam tried it and it _____ perfectly. They got married and _____ happily ever for ever.

Questions

1. Who was Tam?
2. How did her sisters and her stepmother treat her?
3. Why didn't Tam want to go to the festival?
4. What did the fairy godmother do for Tam? What then happened?
5. Why did Tam run away?
6. What did the prince do?
7. What happened at the end?
8. Do you have a fairy tale or a legend that you can tell?