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English III

English III, Week 1

Analyzing Visual Texts

In this activity, you will read a series of visual texts to observe the details they contain and use your observations to make inferences about the creators' perspective on the American Dream. Complete the tasks in the following sequence.

Task 1: Page 7 (5-10 minutes)

- Read “The American Dream” on page 7.
- Do the “Quickwrite” on page 7 after completing the reading

Task 2: Page 8 (10 minutes)

- Observe the illustration on page 8 and write observations.
- Answer both questions on the bottom of page 8.

Task 3: Page 9 (10 minutes)

- Observe the illustration on page 9 and write observations.
- Answer both questions on the bottom of page 9.

Task 4: Page 10 (10 minutes)

- Observe the illustration on page 10 and write observations.
- Answer both questions on the bottom of page 10.

Task 5: Page 11 (20 minutes)

- Answer the three questions on page 11.
- Write any additional questions that you have.

Task 6: Page 12 (30 minutes)

- Complete the “On the Spot Research” for one of the paintings:

Choose one of the visual texts to reexamine. Do some research about the creator or the context in which the text was created and use that information to reflect on your previous response and adjust it as needed. Decide which of the text's details are particularly revealing about the creator's perspective on the American Dream. Write three sentences that connect those details to the information you learned.

- Do not complete question 4.
- “Check Your Understanding” could be completed as enrichment.

Analyzing Visual Texts

Learning Targets

- Use details in a series of visual texts to make inferences about the creators’ perspectives on the American Dream.
- Reflect on and adjust responses based on research.
- Describe personal connections to visual texts.

Preview

In this activity, you will read a series of visual texts to observe the details they contain and use your observations to make inferences about the creators’ perspective on the American Dream.

Learning Strategies

Making Inferences
Note-taking

My Notes

The American Dream

On July 4, 1776, the founders of the United States signed the Declaration of Independence. Early in that document, we find the sentence “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” Those last words in particular are a direct statement of the American Dream—the idea that people have the right to live in ways that makes them happy.

Think for a moment about your own potential. What kinds of things interest you? What pursuits bring you happiness? What kinds of accomplishments do you find worthwhile? Imagine the life you want to live and think about ways to build that life. That is your American Dream.

Quickwite: After spending a few minutes considering the preceding questions, use the following lines to describe your perspective on the American Dream.

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Visual Text 1

Directions: Observe the illustration closely and record your observations.



This color lithograph by J. Keppler titled “Welcome to All!” was originally published in *Puck* magazine in 1880. *Puck* magazine was a weekly humor magazine in the United States in circulation from 1871 to 1918.

What details do you observe in this illustration?

What details in this illustration could be significant clues about how the creator perceives the American Dream?

Visual Text 2

Directions: Observe the photograph closely and record your observations.



This photograph titled, “World’s Highest Standard of Living,” was taken by photographer Margaret Bourke-White and was featured in *Life* magazine’s February 1937 issue.

What details do you observe in this visual text?

What details in this visual could be significant clues about how the creator perceives the American Dream?

Visual Text 3

Directions: Observe the mural closely and record your observations.



Xavier Cortada's painted his 96" x 96" mural "Stepping into the American Dream" for the White House Conference on Minority Home Ownership in 2002.

What details do you observe in this mural?

What details in this mural could be significant clues about how the creator perceives the American Dream?

Returning to the Images

- Return to the visual texts as you respond to the following questions. Use evidence from the texts to support your responses.
 - Write any additional questions you have about the visual texts in your Reader/Writer Notebook.
1. The people depicted in both “Welcome to All!” and “World’s Highest Standard of Living” are standing in lines. Use details from the visual texts to make inferences about how their experiences are different.

2. What can you infer through the juxtaposition the artist creates in Visual Text 2? What message does it send to the viewer?

3. Look closely at the mural “Stepping into the American Dream.” Describe the expressions on the people’s faces. Name some of the objects in the mural. Based on these details, what do you think the title means?

On the Spot Research

Choose one of the visual texts to reexamine. Do some research about the creator or the context in which the text was created and use that information to reflect on your previous response and adjust it as needed. Decide which of the text's details are particularly revealing about the creator's perspective on the American Dream. Write three sentences that connect those details to the information you learned.

You can use the following sentence frame to help you write each of your sentences:

The _____ is a detail that reveals _____.

- 4. Collaborative Discussion:** In a small group, share the information you learned about the visual text you chose to reexamine. Then expand the conversation to discuss how the text is similar to or different from your own perception of the American Dream. Are there details in the text that are opposed to or supportive of your ideas? What personal connections can you make?

Check Your Understanding

Create a visual text that reflects your current perception of the American Dream using the art supplies provided by your teacher. You will present your visual text to a small group. Use the On the Spot Research sentence frame to help you express how the details in the visual text support your ideas about the American Dream.