

# LANGUAGE, POWER, & AMERICAN IDENTITY

October 31, 2019



# CONTEXT

American Literature

Unit One, Lesson Two

Eleventh Grade

Twelve students, including Stephanie Fox (IEP Student) and Daniela (ELL Student)



# AGENDA

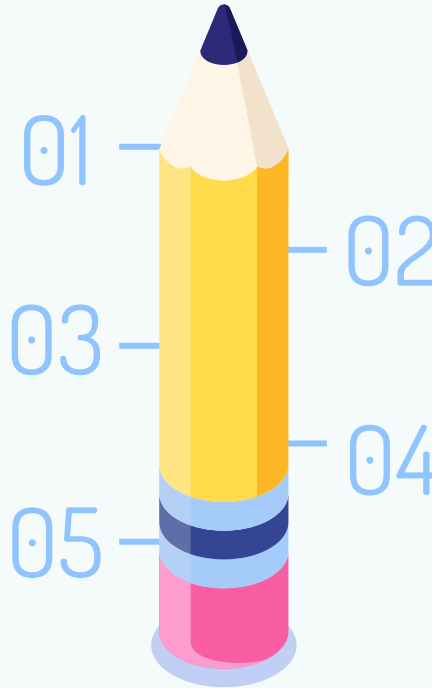
## COMMUNITY BUILDER

Do you have siblings? How old are they?

## INTRODUCTION TO LANGUAGE & POWER

## HOMEWORK REVIEW

News Article Analysis



## REVIEW

What does it mean to be an American? Refer to your previous written response.

## GROUPS + SHARE OUT

01

DO YOU HAVE SIBLINGS? IF  
SO, WHAT ARE THEIR  
NAMES? HOW OLD ARE  
THEY?



02

## WHAT DO YOU THINK OF WHEN YOU THINK OF AMERICA?

Think of images, words, or  
concepts you wrote about  
in your response.



02

WHAT DO YOU THINK  
ROXANNE DUNBAR-ORTIZ  
WOULD THINK OF WHEN  
THINKING OF AMERICA?

Use words, images, and  
phrases from *An  
Indigenous History of the  
United States* to inform  
your responses.



# HOW DOES OUR LANGUAGE TELL DIFFERENT STORIES?

HANNAH



FRANCES



# HOW DOES OUR LANGUAGE TELL DIFFERENT STORIES?



HANNAH

Frances hit my shoulder!

She is a monster!

Any *normal* sister would  
never do that!

FRANCES





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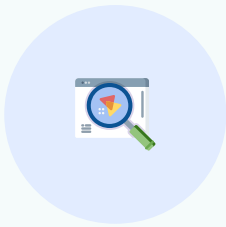
## FRANCES

Hannah called me a meanie  
pants before I did anything!

She was only hit because she  
deserved it.

She asked for it!



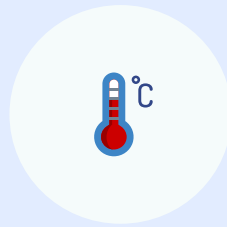


## WHAT (OR WHO) IS THE SUBJECT OF EACH OF THE SENTENCES?

Frances hit my shoulder!

Vs.

Hannah asked to be hit!

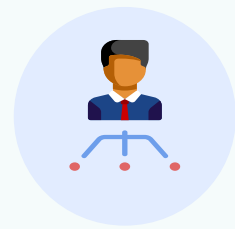


## WHAT WORDS SUGGEST THE AUTHOR'S TONE?

Frances is a monster!

Vs.

Hannah called me a meanie  
pants before I did anything!



## HOW DOES THE AUTHOR'S BIAS INFLUENCE THE LANGUAGE?

Any *normal* sister would never do  
that!

Vs.

Hannah was only hit because she  
deserved it.

# HOW DOES OUR LANGUAGE TELL DIFFERENT STORIES?



## HANNAH

Frances hit my shoulder!

She is a monster!

Any *normal* sister would never do that!

How can I listen to these stories to gain a greater sense of what's true?



## FRANCES

Hannah called me a meanie pants before I did anything!

She was only hit because she deserved it.

She asked for it!

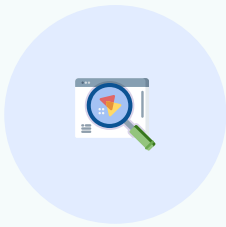




# SPLIT INTO GROUPS

For eight minutes, analyze the language of your group's quotation. You may use the questions as guidance, but don't feel pressured to answer all of them! Prepare to share your findings with the class.

03



## WHAT (OR WHO) IS THE SUBJECT OF EACH OF THE SENTENCES?

What are the objects of the sentence?

What do the subjects and objects suggest about who has agency?

How would power be distributed differently if the sentence were constructed in different ways?



## WHAT WORDS SUGGEST THE AUTHOR'S TONE?

How does the author characterize different individuals and groups?

What tone words can you identify?



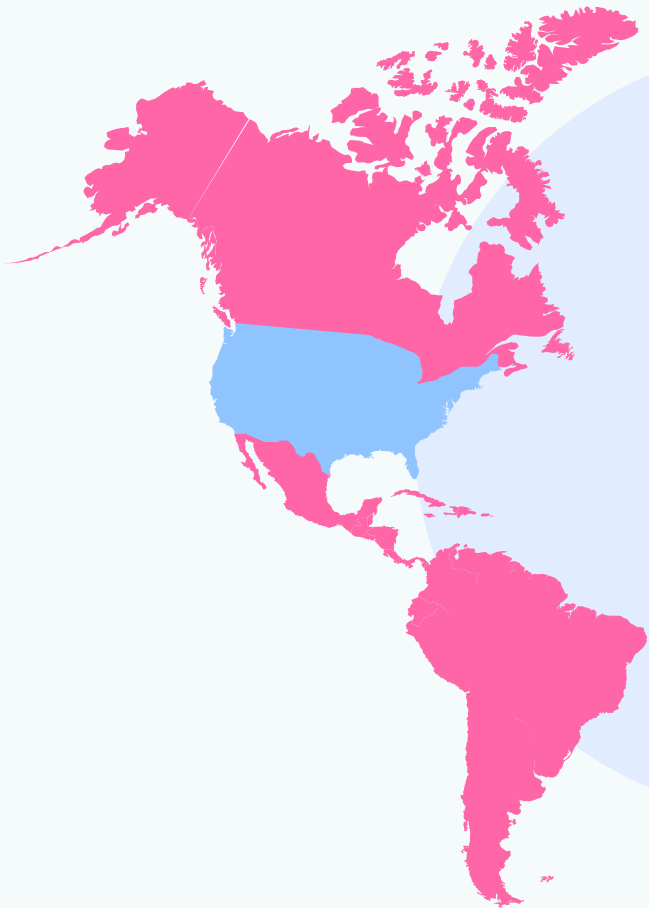
## HOW DOES THE AUTHOR'S BIAS INFLUENCE THE LANGUAGE?

Do we know the author's purpose for writing?

Does the author make assumptions about people or groups?

Does background research help us deconstruct the author's argument?

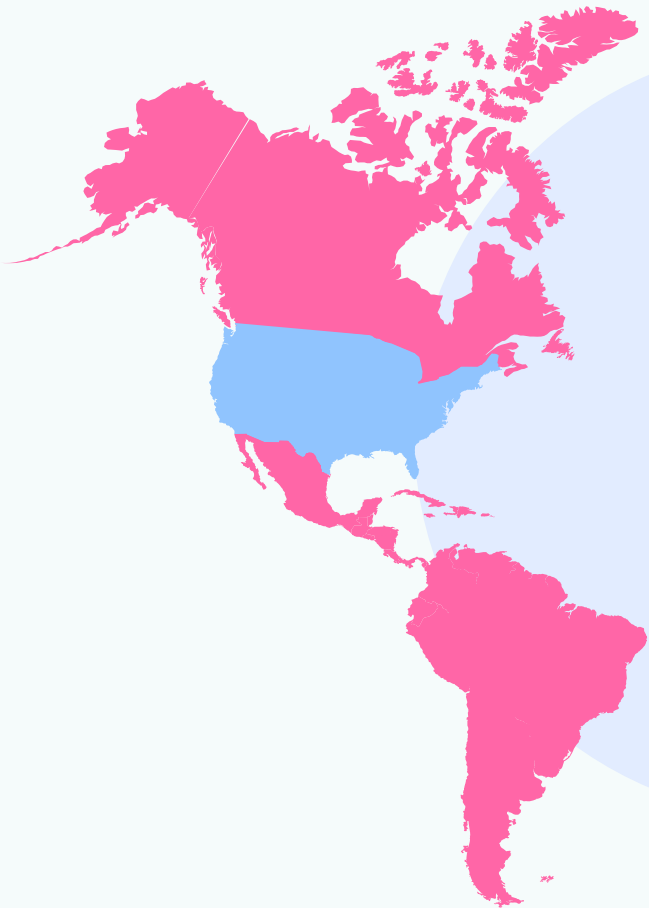
# GROUP ONE



"Through economic penetration of indigenous societies, the European and Euro-American colonial powers created economic dependency and imbalance of trade, then incorporated the indigenous nations into spheres of influence and controlled them indirectly or as protectorates."

*FROM AN INDIGENOUS HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES* BY ROXANNE DUNBAR-ORTIZ

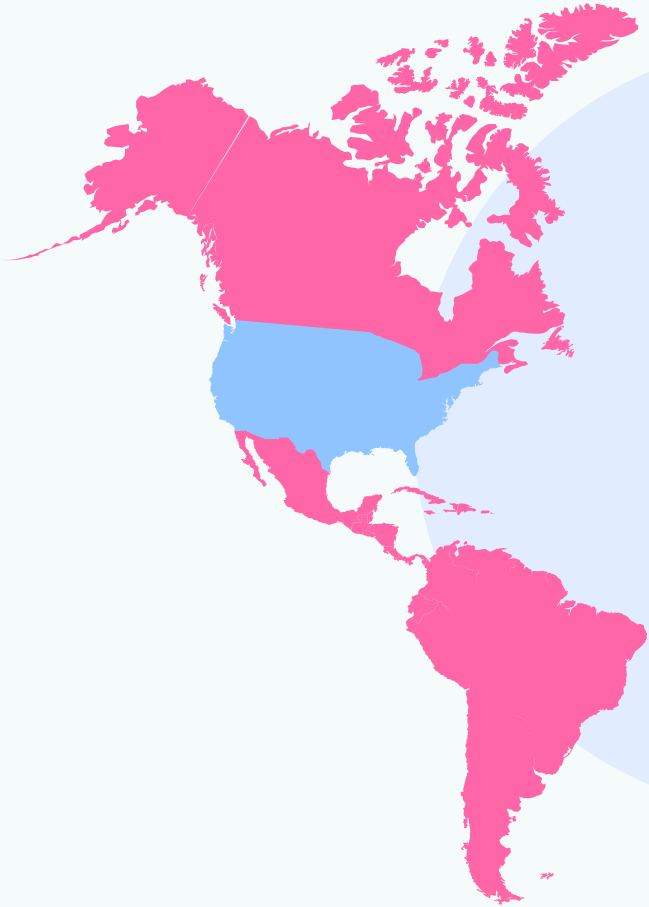
# GROUP TWO



"In every stage of these Oppressions We have  
Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms: Our  
repeated Petitions have been answered only by  
repeated injury. A Prince whose character is thus  
marked by every act which may define a Tyrant is unfit  
to be the ruler of a free people."

FROM THE UNITED STATES DECLARATION OF  
INDEPENDENCE

# GROUP THREE

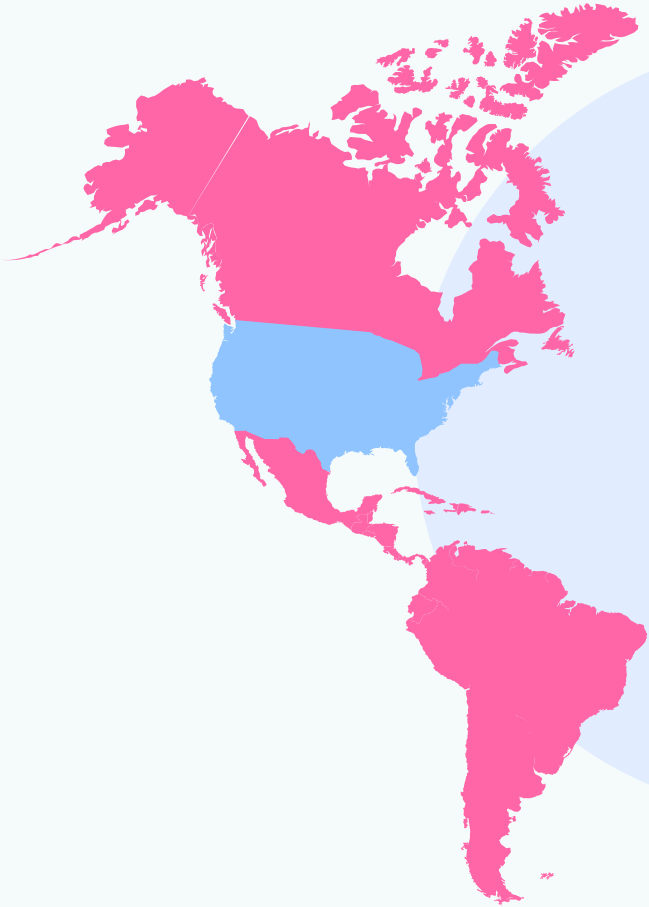


"He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions."

FROM THE UNITED STATES DECLARATION OF  
INDEPENDENCE



# GROUP FOUR



"US History, as well as inherited Indigenous trauma, cannot be understood without dealing with the genocide that the United States committed against Indigenous people" (9 Dunbar-Ortiz).

FROM *AN INDIGENOUS HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES* BY ROXANNE DUNBAR-ORTIZ

HOW DO WE READ TO  
UNDERSTAND THE  
AMERICAN STORY?



# HOMEWORK

Select a contemporary American news article. Print out the article and annotate, highlighting potential words suggesting the author's attitude or tone. Write a short response. More details on handouts.



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