**Lesson 3**

**Title**: “Only in this country”

**Duration**: 45 min.

**Grade Level/Subject**: Senior AP Literature & Composition

**Central Focus**: The central focus of this lesson is analyzing the concept of the American Dream, and more specifically, what that concept means to the different members of the Ganguli family at this point in *The Namesake*. Through background research, students will establish the meaning of the American Dream to various immigrant families and communities. With this support, they will then analyze the opening chapters of *The Namesake* to find what the American Dream means to the Gangulis.

**Standard**: IL-ISBE-ELA-CC-2010.11-12.W.7. Research to Build and Present Knowledge: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

**Objective**: After independent research, students will be able to demonstrate understanding of what the American Dream means to the Ganguli family with 80% accuracy.

**Assessment:** There will be a formal assessment in the form of a question in Google Classroom asking the students what the American Dream means to the Gangulis based on the opening chapters, and how that conception is similar and different from the perspectives the students read during their research. Informal assessment will be present as I walk around the room and question the students as to the results of their research and their reflections on *The Namesake*.

**Diversity of Learners:** There are 23 students in this AP Literature & Composition course. Of those students, the vast majority (19) are white. One student is a black male, and three students are Latinas. There are 12 female students and 11 male students, a nearly even gender split. The vast majority of students are from upper-class or upper-middle class homes, in line with the student body population. There is one struggling reader in this class, who is taking the AP course because it was the only English course available to them with their schedule. Another student had brain surgery to remove a tumor earlier in the school year; because of this, she has missed many school days, and is still only at half-attendance for most of the week. While there is no cognitive decline from the surgery, the sheer amount of missed time and outside stress means she merits special attention. Additionally, there is one boy in the classroom who likely has some form of Autism or Asperger’s but has never been formally tested or diagnosed. He is on the same intellectual level as the rest of the students in the class, but can struggle if directions are not concrete, and sometimes has difficulties with abstract concepts and ideas. As this is an AP classroom, the vast majority of students are talented intellectually; even so, there are one or two students who stand out as particularly gifted among this group.

**Personal/Cultural/Community Connections to Lesson:** All of the students have an expression of the American Dream, whether they are conscious of it or not. The writing at the opening of class is designed to draw out these American Dreams and get students thinking about how the American Dream can mean different things to different people. Additionally, the students very much enjoy using the Internet independently and using their laptops, and this lesson is designed to incorporate both those elements. The students will be allowed to discuss their research and conclusions with each other, creating a greater community understanding of the concept.

**Adaptations:** Adaptations for this lesson are slightly different than the previous two days, since this lesson is focused on individual research and work. Based on prior assessments and observation, it is my belief that the students requiring adaptations will be able to succeed at this assessment. However, it is important to plan for student struggles. I specifically want to have the student with suspected autism read the assessment requirements before he begins to read the article; I will then conference with him to be sure he knows what is being asked of him and what he needs to read for. If the student recovering from brain surgery has been present the past two days, she will likely not need any additional support. If she has been absent, however, I will need to take several minutes to discuss in a one-on-one setting about the previous day’s reading and analysis and make sure she has clarity on the read chapters before she begins the research task. For the student who is a struggling reader, I will meet with her multiple times throughout the hour to ask her to summarize each of the online resources she has chosen. She also has the option of choosing resources which are video-based and may be of help to her.

**Prior Knowledge and Skills:** The students have prior experience with research, having completed an extensive research project the previous year. They are therefore well prepared to conduct and analyze research on a given topic. All the research articles available to them to read are of a Lexile level where all the students are comfortable. The students’ previous exposure to the American Dream concept comes from their history classes, and will therefore require a review which is built into the lesson introduction.

**Pre-assessment:** A pre-assessment will be conducted before the unit begins to determine students’ familiarity with the American Dream. As mentioned previously, the students have been exposed to the idea of the American Dream before through their history class, and some may recall it from their reading F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *The Great Gatsby*. However, both these exposures took place before this academic year, so the students may need help activating this prior learning.

**Academic Language:** The students are demonstrating their understanding, both of the resources they interact with as well as the novel itself, through the learning task: research and analysis of the given resources in addition to *The Namesake*.

**Planning Resources:**

1. *The Namesake*
2. Whiteboard
3. Whiteboard markers
4. Google Classroom
5. Laptop
6. Online resources

**Learning Theories:** Piaget’s constructivism drives this lesson. The students already have several schemas of the American Dream in their head: they at least have an abstract understanding of it, a personalized version of it, and some understanding of what it means to the Gangulis. Through their research and analysis they will add new perspectives to their schemas, modifying each of them as they impart new information.

**Introduction:** To introduce the lesson, I will ask the students if they remember our previous conversation about the American Dream. The students will respond accordingly. At this point I will hand each student a sticky-note and ask them to write their own American Dream on the note and post it on the front whiteboard. The students will have five minutes to write and post their notes.

**Step-by-Step Instructional Delivery:**

1.From there we will move into the research portion of the lesson.

2. Students will be directed to access the research articles on Google Classroom talking about different immigrant perspectives on the American Dream.

3. The students will be asked to read three articles and take notes on what each resource has to say about the American Dream from an immigrant’s perspective.

4. They will then be asked to respond to the Google Classroom question: considering the first two chapters in *The Namesake*, what does the American Dream look like to each member of the Ganguli family? How is that perspective similar or different to those expressed in the resources?

5. Specifically I want the students to think about and respond to Ashoke’s comment that he was “born twice in India and once in America.”

6. As the students work, I will move among them to engage in questioning patterns.

7. This task is designed to take the entire class period; if however, all the students finish before the class period is over, we will take the remaining time to engage in several activities.

8. The first will be for the students to discuss their responses with a partner who is also already finished, seeing where they agreed and disagreed.

9. The second is for the entire class to share their responses to the Google Classroom question. What did they find in their research? What about the Gangulis?

10. Finally, if there is time, the class will review the symbols and themes we have found in the first two chapters and discussed yesterday.

**Closing:** To close I will thank the students for a great lesson and ask them to submit their Google Classroom question if they have not done so already.

**Gearing up and gearing down:** An issue to be aware of with this kind of independent work is some students may wish to rush through it quickly to be done for the day, or to work on homework in other classes. I am attempting to counteract this by making each resource a reading or video which cannot be skipped through easily. This will hopefully have the effect of making the students take their time in formulating their responses. An additional tactic being used is making the Google Classroom assessment detailed in what is required, as well as being worth more points than a typical daily homework assignment. For students who complete the task quickly, I will ask them to pair with another student in the room who is also done and to discuss their responses as well as the articles they read. While I do not anticipate students struggling with these readings, as they are intended for general audiences, I will be moving around the classroom constantly during this activity. If a student seems to be struggling, I will engage in guided questioning to help the student come to better understanding.