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Instructor's Manual to accompany Goshgarian, Exploring Language, 10e

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PREFACE

This Instructor's Manual provides answers to the questions asked after each selection in Exploring Language, Tenth Edition. Such answers do not presume to do the work of the instructor. They are only meant to help. Certainly, these answers are not exhaustive or the only ones available. Students and instructors are likely to develop responses with multiple points of view and varied perspectives. Such inquiry should be encouraged.

Whenever possible, we provide suggestions for helping guide class discussion around a particular question or issue it raises.

The book's website, Exploring Language on the Web (URL here) includes additional activities and links to related sources. The instructor section provides assistance in designing and developing a more effective course using Exploring Language, Tenth Edition. It also features links to a variety of helpful Web resources for critical thinking, reading, and writing; Longman's online Instructor's Manual; and an electronic "syllabus builder" to help you manage your course.

Student Resources on the companion website Exploring Language on the Web include chapter overviews, Web exercises encouraging further exploration of the topics in the textbook, online reading assignments, and Web links to other sites that can help students with writing and research.

Chapter 1
Breaking Silences

BEGINNINGS: MOVING FROM SILENCE INTO LANGUAGE

Language and Thought
Susanne K. Langer

1. In paragraph 3 Langer says “a sign is anything that announces the existence or the imminence of some event, the presence of a thing or a person, or a change in the state of affairs.” It is a clue to something to be expected—as, for example, dark, heavy clouds are a sign of a rainstorm, or smoke a sign of fire. Both human beings and animals respond to signs. A symbol, on the other hand, does not announce something. It stands for something; it represents something intellectually. Symbols require the exclusively human capacity of intellect. Only humans, therefore, can think in or respond to symbols.

2. As Langer says in paragraph 4, there would be little difference between humans and animals. Without the ability to symbolize, we would not have speech. We would respond only to the moment and communicate in grunts and gestures. Language would not exist.

3. Langer believes that language, which is symbolic, evolved from conceptualizing, from the fixing of objects or ideas to primitive sounds representing them.

4. Open for discussion.

5. She compares the uses of signs by humans and animals. She then cites specific signs that humans and animals respond to and why.
6. An effective rhetorical strategy is to show before telling. Giving an illustration of the concept first helps concretize it for the reader so that when the abstract definition is offered, it has already been mapped into experience for us.

A Brief History of English
Paul Roberts

1. Roberts outlines the various wars (Roman, Goth, Anglo-Saxon, Norman) that were responsible for “injections” into English of words from other languages. He also outlines more recent historical events that had a bearing on the development of English: the printing press, the English Renaissance, the acceptance of English into the academy, the advent of the dictionary, and the invention of English grammar.

2. Based on the examples given (wine, cheese, butter, cheap, gem), it would seem that the Romans and Anglo-Saxons enjoyed active trade; they also experienced some mutual religious influences (e.g., bishop, church).

3. As Roberts explains in paragraph 21, there were extensive grammatical inflections signifying gender, person, and number for both nouns and verbs; a more complicated pronoun system; and various person, gender, and number endings for adjectives. This system more closely represents Latin than Modern English. Nouns and adjectives had four or five cases rather than the two used in Modern English.

4. The major language-affecting event was the Norman Conquest, which essentially moved Old English to Middle English by accelerating the move away from inflectional endings while introducing French words into English. Political events certainly influence language development at all points in history. Two examples: the development of Creole dialects as a result of French and
English colonization of the Caribbean, and the Afrikaans language used during the Apartheid era in South Africa.

5. Roberts characterizes the French language after the Norman Conquest as the language of the nobility or polite society. Almost every country in the world has dialect splits between classes; some, such as Haiti, retain a national language that is separate from that of the people. This serves to ghettoize the “masses” of a country and retain an unbalanced power system.

6. Roberts organizes the material chronologically, a device that makes perfect sense given his premise that history has had a major effect on the development of English. He simply follows the course of history in his piece.

7. This piece is aimed at an audience that has little or no background in the material, judging from its tone and content. Roberts uses the narrative tone of a storyteller, thereby keeping his article interesting and making complex issues accessible.

8. Roberts successfully demonstrates the relationship between English history and language development throughout his discussion. Particularly strong are paragraphs 25, regarding the Norman Conquest, and 37, regarding the invention of the printing press.

**The Story of Writing**
C. M. Millward

1. As Millward explains, writing was invented for its permanence and ability to be carried to other places. Speech is limited in both time and space. With writing, readers can refer to current records or store them for posterity. While writing initially served the vital function of recordkeeping (and still does), it evolved to include recreational uses such as poetry and literature.
2. Millward describes in paragraph 10 that, for most of the history of writing, literacy has been restricted to a small elite group of bookkeepers and priests. Often, the two occupations were combined in one scribe. Before this, to the illiterate, writing would have seemed a form of magic, an impression that was not discouraged by those who understood its mysteries.

3. A true alphabet is one in which each symbol represents a separate phoneme, not an entire syllable. The Greeks borrowed the Semitic syllabary and began using unneeded characters to represent vowels separately from consonants. Once there were separate characters for vowels, the originally syllabic characters could always be used for consonants alone, and the alphabet was formed. The challenge to alphabets is that sound systems differ from the original Greek. The Latin alphabet, for example, violates the principle of an ideal alphabet, a one-to-one correspondence between phoneme and grapheme.

4. Some professional writers express themselves eloquently on paper but have difficulty presenting their ideas orally. The concept of extemporaneous speech evades them and they can only relay the message/communication written on the page. In addition, some well-read readers may recognize a written word but be unable to pronounce it in spoken language. For some people, the world of speech is merely functional, but the world of the written word represents the sublime.

5. Logograms are symbols representing a single word, such as in Chinese. Each Chinese character stands for an entire word or morpheme, and one cannot determine the pronunciation of an unfamiliar character from its components. Logographic systems are inefficient for most languages, however, because if every single word in the language is to be represented by a different symbol, an astronomical number of complex symbols is required. Therefore, while the writing is still at the ideographic-logographic stage, scribes may begin to use symbols to represent sounds instead of concepts.

6. Student answers will vary.
7. Open to discussion, but students might comment on how learning about the history of writing requires a chronological organization—such as what Millward provides.

8. The visuals Millward has chosen offer examples of the developmental stages of language and demonstrate how some cultures still rely on these early stages to communicate.

9. Open to discussion. Student opinion will vary. Discussion should include feedback on whether or not these linguistic symbols were accessible to Millward’s audience.

Another Language for the Deaf
Margalit Fox

1. Sign language is different from “spoken” languages because it works spatially instead of acoustically. Paragraph 10 describes each sign as “a compact bundle of data, conveying linguistic information by three primary means at once: the shape of the signer’s hands, the location of the hands in space and the direction in which the hands move.” It is also noted that facial expression can matter. The challenge when transitioning from sign language to written form is trying to get a three dimensional language compressed down onto two-dimensional flat paper.

2. Learning written English is like learning a foreign language for a deaf child because it is a language separate from their everyday necessity. The main literacy obstacle a deaf child faces is that the letters of the alphabet are based on sounds they can’t hear so the immediate associations children who can hear often make do not exist for deaf children.

3. Sign Writing is not as abstract as other ASL writing systems and its scope can handle more literary works.
4. Student answers will vary.

5. Protecting their disability, deaf people may have questioned Sutton’s motives since she has no idea what it is like to live as a deaf person. How could her development for bridging the gap between ASL and written English be the best method? Students can discuss these negative reactions and reason them out since many advances in a number of other fields have occurred because of the involvement of such “outsiders.”

6. Nicole moved from not knowing written versions of words and doing poorly on standardized tests to maintaining a B average in a program for hearing impaired students conducted in English. She knew the visual before, but because of Sign Writing she now has the written complement, thereby a more accessible standard.

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS: COMING INTO LANGUAGE

Homemade Education
Malcolm X

1. Malcolm X is frustrated by his inability to express what he wanted to convey in letters, especially those addressed to Elijah Muhammad and political figures. In addition, his reading skills were poor. A weak vocabulary forced him to skip over so many words in a book that he ended up with “little idea of what the book said.”

2. Malcolm X had mastered the slang of street language, which was very effective with his peers. But these skills could not be transferred to letters: “How would I sound writing in slang, the way I would say it, something such as ‘Look, daddy, let me pull your coat about a cat.’”
3. Knowledge and the joy and satisfaction of pursuing it liberates him. His body is in prison, but his mind is set free.

4. Open for discussion.

5. Open for discussion.

6. Open for discussion

7. The thesis is not stated here, but the subject matter introduces the importance of writing and the ability to communicate.

A Word for Everything
Helen Keller

1. Helen Keller lived for almost seven years in a world of absolute dark silence. She could communicate her frustrations only by having temper tantrums and had no knowledge that there were other ways to communicate. A freewriting exercise in which students imagine such a dark and silent world, the only world Helen had known, may help students grasp how important this moment of awakening was for her. After freewriting on the topic, the class can discuss whether Helen’s experience would have been different (or even possible) at a younger or older age.

2. Some linguists study how children are able to understand abstract words or conceptualize non-present objects. This process, despite much study, is still not completely understood. For Helen, the word think came after Anne Sullivan kept touching Helen’s forehead and spelling think repeatedly. It is with a flash of realization that Helen puts the word and the abstract action together. Helen is able to conceptualize these words only after she has mastered other elements of language. Even so, it seems miraculous that our brains can do this exercise at all.

3. Before Helen understood that communication was possible, she was only satisfied with concrete action. Because she felt no connection to
the doll—it had no name and no true meaning for her—breaking it was satisfying because it was different. She was able to master the form of matter the doll took, even if she was unable to understand it as an object concept. When Helen learns that all the things around her have names, and therefore meaning, she realizes that she has altered the object doll and changed it from its true form. She feels remorse because the doll, once given a distinct name, now possesses meaning. Discussion can center on the connection between emotions and language—and how language enables us to feel and express emotion.

4. The amenities of conversation—inflections of voice, changes in tone, facial expressions, pauses in pace—contribute as much to conversation as the words themselves. Select a few stock sentences and demonstrate how their meanings can be radically changed by simply changing the facial expression or inflection of voice when the words are spoken. What would it be like to communicate in a world in which no tone or expression could be detected?

5. Review Keller’s sentence in paragraph 25: “The beautiful truth burst upon my mind—I felt that there were invisible lines stretched between my spirit and the spirits of others.” Her words are vibrant, and she commands language in a way we take for granted. Because Keller has never personally known descriptive words of color and sound, she speaks in language that is more spiritual.

6. Student answers will vary, but there is a joyful exuberance to Keller’s writing that permeates her essay.

7. Keller uses simile and metaphor because she has to connect her experiences in a dark and silent world to one that predominately sees and hears. Ask students to describe ordinary ideas without the benefit of descriptive words that one must see or hear to understand.

**EXPLORING THE LANGUAGE OF VISUALS: SIGN LANGUAGE**

1. The photograph features an adult, presumably a teacher, signing to one student while another looks on. The conversation seems amiable,
and all participants are involved in the action, even if all are not actually signing. The teacher is looking at the “listener’s” eyes—just as she would during a spoken conversation.

2. Student answers will vary.

3. Student answers will vary, but ask students to consider the ways they communicate, or how they feel about communicating, with the hearing impaired. For example, many people think that if they just shout, the hearing impaired will suddenly be able to hear them. Alternatively, they may try to over-accentuate the way they shape their words (ironically drawing out sounds) so that the hearing impaired can “lip read.” Many people with speech impediments find that others will volunteer to finish their sentences or fill in their stuttered words. On the flip side, some hearing people feel isolated near people using sign language—just as if they were present in a situation in which a foreign language was spoken. They feel left out.

4. Sign language interpreters use their whole body and face to augment their signing. While some gestures will make sense to hearing listeners unfamiliar with sign language, it is probable that most will be unrecognizable. This is because sign language, contrary to popular belief, is not a word for word substitution for spoken language—the grammars and vocabularies make the pattern of signing more complex than most people realize.

5. Open to discussion.

6. Open to discussion.

The Language of Silence
Maxine Hong Kingston

1. In kindergarten, Kingston still felt a solidarity with her younger sister and the other Chinese girls who did not speak at school. Oblivious to the expectations of the American school system, it never
occurred to her that she had to talk or pass kindergarten. When this shield of ignorance cracked and Kingston realized that she had to speak and read at school, insecurity and fear conspired to take her voice away.

2. Kingston could not understand why the American "I" had only three strokes while the Chinese equivalent had seven. Nor could she understand the word with its lack of a strong consonant. While Kingston struggled with these inconsistencies, the teacher—out of frustration with Kingston’s apparent inability to learn—punishes her. Similarly, Kingston recalls Chinese girls left out of a classroom play because their voices were too soft, rendering them even more silent.

3. The Chinese school was more compassionate, more personal. Memorized lessons were recited privately. It was also more permissive since at recess children shouted, fought, and bounded about without restraint. Self-consciousness was clearly lacking there. As a result, the children, especially the girls, used language forcefully and freely both in and out of the classroom.

4. Silence, like the black-wash, covers her hidden potential for expression. These are twin illustrations of self-repression, even of shame.

5. The moment contains some of each: defeat, because her words are still jagged and torn, and triumph, because her voice is loud. She has conquered silence.

6. It isn’t until paragraph 17 that the author makes clear her intention to describe her “language of silence” as a young school girl. But her cues are evident in her suggestion that in ancient China she’d be “an outlaw knot-maker.” The details and dialogue in the tongue-cutting episode highlight this description, especially the reasoning: to free her tongue for expression in different languages.
7. Kingston’s self-consciousness is what dominates the portrait she paints of herself. Hers is a quiet, nonassertive though honest voice. She is remarkably candid in her admission that she has such a terrible time talking still.

The Jellyfish
Susan Kinsolving

1. In terms of grammar, Caroline mistakenly adds –ed to “bleed” and “sing,” which she substitutes for “sting.” She also calls a jellyfish a “jello umbrello.” Young children will apply universal "past tense" endings on verbs that they know, heedless of irregular conjugations. All of these errors are approximations of words she may have heard before but since she is only three years old, she cannot distinguish the difference.

2. Student answers will vary.

3. The poem is a comparison of two descriptions of a jellyfish—one from a child and the other from a mother. It illustrates “coming into language” in its evolution from abstract to concrete language.

4. Open to discussion.

5. The mother is highly stylized in her speech and her daughter’s approximations of language show similar potential. A phrase like “time’s tentacles untangling her parachute” characterizes the mother as an alliterative nurturer who censors herself from correcting her child’s language mistakes.

6. The basic message about language in this poem is that it evolves and as time goes by, mistakes will correct themselves.

7. The words chosen are to physicalize the description of a jellyfish. Students may find the child’s description more accurate since a
jellyfish looks as if it is made of Jello and its shape resembles an umbrella, rather than a “translucent mass.”

Spanish Lessons
Christine Marin

1. Marín’s three opening paragraphs describe an incident on a high school band trip that made her aware of the power of the Spanish language in her life. Her singing of the song “La Bamba” and the Anglo girl’s negative reaction to it made her realize the resentment that some individuals harbor towards people of ethnicities other than their own. Her growing consciousness of the power of language, and the appreciation for a language other than the dominant one, is best stated in paragraph 3, “I learned the power of both the English and Spanish languages on that band trip. . . . The Spanish language posed a threat to that girl, and it made me proud of being a Mexican American despite the fact that I didn’t speak Spanish. I felt superior to her because I knew two languages. . . .”

2. In both paragraphs 5 and 6, Marín offers examples of the cultural confusion her physical appearance caused—an inability to assist Spanish-speaking customers and a college advisor suggesting she major in Spanish “simply because of [her] surname and brown-colored skin.” She explains her conscious effort to learn more of the Spanish language and her later alliance with MASO.

3. Although a job as a bibliographer, which emphasizes a keen use of English skills and could even be considered its own language, might seem unlikely to open itself to another language, Marín’s chance to use her bibliography skills for the Chicano Studies Collection (see paragraph 11) allowed her to appreciate her own Chicana heritage even more.

4. Marín’s initial understanding of the word “Chicano” was that of friendship and a term of endearment, stemming from her father’s use of it. During her college days, however, the word took a more defiant
meaning as it was used in conjunction with the word “power.” As she states in paragraph 10: “The word was an assertion of ethnic and cultural pride, a term heard in a new form of social protests and associated with student activism and civil rights militancy.” Students may want to discuss their knowledge of other college campus–civil rights movements from the 1970s to account for the transition of the meaning of the word “Chicano.” This may lead to group discussion of how the word meanings can change to serve different purposes, which may lead to an exploration of the power(s) of language itself.

5. Paragraph 7 details the experience Marín had in an English class that led her to feel that her “English ability was questioned and discredited.” Her teacher assumed that because Marín was ethnically Chicana, she would naturally have difficulties with English. The teacher did not know that Marín was raised as an English-speaking, English-educated student. Marín’s reaction to the accusation of plagiarism was to drop the class and not confront the teacher, and subsequently go on to choose a career in bibliography. In a way, even though Marín was a native-English speaker, her teacher denied her the right to the English language because of her ethnic background. However, this experience “forced” Marín into her career as a bibliographer, and thus into the eventual study and exploration of her ethnic heritage.

6. Marín’s voice can be heard through her work as bibliographer for the Chicano Studies Collection because she “became the expert, the liaison for scholars, students, and researchers” (paragraph 13). Her compiling of the library’s holdings gives her an empowered voice to share the information she finds about her own Chicano and Southwest U.S. heritage.

7. Marín’s last sentence brings her essay full circle. She began with the anecdote about the Mexican Americans singing “La Bamba” at the back of the bus, and then tells her readers how she came to serve academia, or the ivory tower, through her expertise of the English language, her teacher’s denial of her mastery of that language, and her
appreciation of her Chicana heritage. In addition, the courses she teaches, such as “La Chicana” and “Women of the Southwest,” provide her with examples of how one can use the power of language to tell one’s ancestral story. Students can also skim the essay again for the amount of times she uses the phrase “the power of language” to note Marín’s personal evolution.

SPEAKING OUT: LANGUAGE THAT INSPIRED CHANGE

Seneca Falls Declaration
Elizabeth Cady Stanton

1. It is likely that Cady Stanton modeled her “Declaration . . .” after the Declaration of Independence because she wanted to use an already respected and successful format, albeit a male-authored one. This is an effective strategy because it proves a woman can write and speak in an articulate manner about her beliefs. However, some people may criticize it because it relies upon a “male” model, which contradicts the declaration’s purpose. The speech claims that equality between the sexes does not exist: the male has made “direct establishment of an absolute tyranny over her.”

2. Students can review the “repeated injuries and usurpation on the part of man toward woman” Cady Stanton lists, but the prevailing ones still in existence are described in paragraphs 13, 15, 16, and 18—unequal salaries, exclusion from the ministry, different codes of morals, and destruction of confidence.

3. The Biblical reference, this “great precept of nature,” addresses Cady Stanton’s belief that God created men and women to be equal partners. Paragraph 29 extends this argument to state that “it is time woman moves into the enlarged sphere which her Creator has assigned her” instead of the suppressed world she has been (legally) forced to grow accustomed to in the United States. Her use of the Bible may be
considered ironic in that it is the same source used by many opponents of women’s rights to justify the subjugation of women.

4. Cady Stanton’s promotion of using “righteous means” re-emphasizes her points about women needing to speak their minds and use the nonviolent yet powerful means of language to gain their deserved rights back.

5. Students can list these ways then go on to highlight how she appeals to people’s faith/beliefs in religion and in the United States legal system to add credibility to her attacks on these boundaries.

**Letter from Birmingham Jail**

Martin Luther King

1. Student answers will vary.

2. His voice is confident and honest. His feelings reflect his argument about nonviolent action as the means to overcome discrimination. He establishes his authority and credibility by stating his credentials within the letter, answering criticisms of his work, and comparing himself and his work to that of St. Paul and Socrates.

3. The status quo in 1963 Birmingham was a white power structure that maintained segregation. Students can discuss their opinions of what the status quo is today. Considering waves of political correctness it seems that while a white power structure is still intact, less discrimination is tolerated.

4. His catalogue of reasons makes vivid the injustices of segregation via images and words.

5. Like question 2, this question asks students to analyze King’s voice. Students can partner up and read several paragraphs out loud to each other as if reading a letter. Then one student can present the letter to the rest of the class so to hear any signs of a preaching tone.
6. The sections are indeed effective because begins with definitions of just and unjust laws. He appeals to authorities (St. Thomas Aquinas, Martin Buber, Paul Tillich, and the 1954 decision of the Supreme Court), then offers three examples.

Aren’t I a Woman?
Sojourner Truth

1. Truth restates the questions raised by her male dissenters to open the issues up for discussion. Her repetition of the rhetorical question, “And aren’t I a woman?” is also expertly used by Truth to “answer” male dissenters who may feel that women have no rights. Ask students to compose short paragraphs speaking in the voices of these male dissenters articulating their arguments against women’s rights.

2. The Biblical argument against the equality of women is that Eve came from Adam’s rib—thus, she was created out of man. In addition, the fall from grace condemns her to be “ruled” by him as part of her punishment for eating of the Tree of Knowledge. Truth addresses the Adam and Eve story in paragraph 4 and makes a valid point: “The first woman God ever made was strong enough to turn the world upside down. . . .” This is a great spin on Eve’s story in favor of women’s abilities because so many interpretations of the story place blame on Eve and do not see this as a positive display of female power. Contrary to the passivity imposed on women by the male power structure, Eve, the first woman, was a woman of action.

3. The fear of mixing and confusing causes stems from the fact that Truth was a black woman and the women at the Akron convention may not have wanted to combine their issue of gender inequality with that of racial inequality. Students can openly discuss how they feel these women reacted to Truth’s speech, but it seems as though her speech was one of the most powerful at the convention. She was a woman who never had a man “help her into carriages, or over mud puddles. . . .” Her words were sure to make these white women’s right
activists re-think their situations and articulate their wants/demands for equality in a new fashion.

4. It takes courage and conviction for anyone to speak in favor of that which they believe, but Truth’s speech shows the power of language. She knew that she was undervalued by the people at the convention. She knew that many women there did not want her to speak because of her race. However, Truth uses her voice, and the power of repetition, to shame them all. Her very life is an argument against the male power structure. As a former slave, Truth had worked harder than most white men had. She uses her history to confront the male argument of female frailty and weakness.

**The Struggle for Human Rights**

Eleanor Roosevelt

1. Roosevelt makes a special attempt to directly address her audience in France. While she addresses the UN General Assembly and not an exclusive French audience, she highlights historical moments of human freedom, especially in France, to set up her points. This acknowledges to her audience the special role France plays in the convention. She reinforces the audience throughout the essay but most specifically again in her conclusion where she states, “Freedom for the individual is an inseparable part of the cherished traditions of France.”

2. The following countries abstained: USSR, Yugoslavia, Ukraine, and Byelorussia. Roosevelt feels they abstained because of a difference in how they conceive the term human rights. She does propose that each nation have its own covenant between its people and assembly.

3. Her detailed comparison of US to USSR is a convincing argument to remind students of the historical differences of the time period and what the United Nations’ mission toward people’s human rights was and continues to be.
4. Paragraph 13 details the term freedom and includes the freedoms of speech, press, religion and assembly. Students should openly discuss whether or not they feel the definition should be expanded and why.

5. "Free" in the USSR means promoting Communist Party principles, not freedom of individual expression. Political dissent can result from misinterpretation or extension of freedoms not originally granted.

6. Right of Choice is quite different from basic freedoms because, as her extended comparison proves, humans in USSR are not given the same choices as those in the US.

7. The appeal to God in the end of her speech proves the feeling with which she wants human rights to be realized. This appeal also proves her credibility as a woman committed to faith.

8. “We” and “our” is used to include her United Nations audience with her Democratic opinions regarding human rights. Together, she feels, their decision to ratify the International Declaration of Human Rights can be made and valued for years to come.
Chapter 2
Writers Writing: Words in Contexts

THE WRITING PROCESS

Writing for an Audience
Linda Flower

1. Flower assumes that her audience is composed of young college students with much familiarity with school but not as much experience with writing in a college context. For instance, to illustrate her claims (paragraph 2) she uses the child/parent communication issue; in paragraph 4, she suggests experience with vacations or the like that might also suggest a certain economic status; also, she points out how her insights will be relevant in college writing (see paragraph 9).

2. Knowledge—Any place in the text where Flower provides hard information about writing would effectively answer this part of the question: see all of paragraph 1; the topic sentences in each paragraph, and other expository sentences (i.e., sentence 1 in paragraphs 2, 3, and 5, and sentences 1–3 in paragraphs 4 and 7). See also her simile in paragraph 10 where she refers to examinations. Attitudes—Flower assumes that her readers appreciate the need for good writing and want to be better writers; she doesn’t offer much of an argument to persuade them of this. Other evidence of her attitude (and assumption of her readers’ attitude) can be seen in the instructional voice at the end of paragraph 2 (Let us look…), in the first sentences in paragraph 3 (When we say…much of what we “know”), and so on. She assumes that her readers are willing to be instructed on these matters but also that she already shares common ground with them. The fact that she refers to the reader as “you” suggests her desire to personally connect with them. Needs—An important example of meeting the needs of her audience is evident in paragraph 9 where she applies her general
claims to college writing, in particular, and in paragraph 10 where she distinguishes kinds of writing.

3. Flower initiates this discussion in her introductory paragraph. The more focused area of her discussion begins in paragraphs 5 and 6 where she shows that attitudes may be critical or uncritical, that the key is getting an audience to see as you see. She continues this tack in paragraphs 8 and 9 when she distinguishes interest from need and encourages writing choices that address the latter as a means of being more persuasive. She argues for the importance of persuasiveness based on the needs of the writer as much as the needs of the audience. The writer bridges the gaps of knowledge, attitude, and need so that s/he can get what s/he wants from the reader: permission to do something, a good grade in a class, etc. This is evident in the examples she incorporates into the three sections of her discussion that effectively underscore the goals of the college writer.

4. Answers here will vary. Students should be encouraged to respond with very specific information, both on what’s here and what might/should be here in order for the text to be more effective. If students have a hard time answering this question, they might be encouraged to look at the discussions at the beginning of each chapter of this text and compare that writer’s work with Flower’s, paying attention to language, sentence structure, organization, rhetorical modes such as narration, definition, exemplification, comparison/contrast, and exposition.

5. Encourage students to use the word “encounter” loosely—think of texts they’ve written, received, or heard of. This is a good activity for blackboard brainstorming and answers will necessarily vary, but students should be encouraged to consider situations that require delivery of good news (announce an award, invite to participate in special activity, tell someone their investments have made a huge profit) and bad news (submitted work is not acceptable, a desired program is being discontinued, financial aid is unavailable). They might consider how the same news might be delivered to different
audiences (i.e., a student is failing; what is the difference in how the student is told, the parents are notified, the student’s advisor is notified). They could think of letters demanding action on the part of the audience (pay a bill, fulfill certain requirements by a certain date) versus those that ask for a person’s help. They might also be asked to specifically address the unique problems of telling a teacher about things s/he undoubtedly already knows, and even better than the student. Adjustments should include differences in language, tone, organization (direct or indirect approach), detail of information presented or glossed over, and so on.

6. Answers will of course vary, but students should be encouraged to think of times when they were not able to understand a text, or were put off by its simplicity, insensitivity, or offensiveness. They should consider a variety of strategies that can help bridge different kinds of gaps in addition to the predictable rhetorical ones: visual aids, sidebars, glossaries, and appendices.

The Maker’s Eye: Revising Your Own Manuscript
Donald M. Murray

1. The fundamental difference is one of attitude. When amateur writers finish a first draft, they consider the job of writing done. When professionals finish a first draft, they feel they’ve just begun; they expect that several more drafts will follow.

2. They must accept the criticism of others with suspicion, and their praise with even more suspicion. Murray’s point is that a writer cannot depend on other writers’ opinions. Writers should also distance themselves at times from their writing so that they can return to it with a more objective eye. Writers must also learn to read their own material critically but constructively—“to cut what is bad, to reveal what is good.”

3. Students will probably be surprised, especially at the words of Dahl (paragraph 9).
4. See paragraphs 13 through 20. He cites information, meaning, audience, form, structure, development, dimension, and voice as eight things a writer must keep in mind when revising.

5. He means that even after a piece has been submitted to editors or published, the writer will always think of something to add or change. For professional writers, rereading is always an occasion for revising.

6. Quite well. He cites two famous novelists, Ray Bradbury and Anthony Burgess, in addition to Roald Dahl, whose extraordinary admission should impress students.

7. One of the refreshing qualities of Murray’s advice is his personalizing it. He talks about how he reread and reworked this very essay on the necessity of revision. Perhaps the best illustration of his final point—that revision never ends, and a writer’s eye is never satisfied—is the way he ends his essay in mid-sentence.

**Getting Started**
Anne Lamott

1. “Writing is about the truth” when we tell the stories of our lives; sharing the details of our lives means having to recall those details and observations. Analytical writing can make use of such techniques and noticing details in other texts may become easier after one is forced to do it about oneself.

2. “Nurse Ratched” is a character from "One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest" who has become almost synonymous with the disciplinarian medical professional—a nurse whose unyielding worldview and sadism, when unchecked, could provoke a homicidal meltdown in her emotionally regressed patients. Lamott uses this character to describe the day-to-day annoyances that can interfere with your writing. Her recommendation for stifling the voice of Nurse Ratched is to “hold an imaginary gun to your head and make yourself stay at the desk.” Her
reasoning is that if you are persistent enough and stay at the desk for an hour, work will happen.

3. Lamott uses a straightforward and honest tone to convey the message that hard work can pay off. She is frank about both the joys and perils of writing and how one must cater to the writing voice. Students can openly discuss whether or not they would like to have Lamott as an instructor based on these characteristics.

4. Student answers will vary.

5. It seems this piece is directed to new students of writing, and perhaps even fellow writing teachers, based on the direct address to a collective “you” or group of people who have stories to tell.

6. Open to discussion and students can use paragraph 11 where Lamott compares good and bad writing days to formulate their opinions.

**What My Students Have Taught Me About Writing**
Pamela Childers

1. Open to discussion.

2. Tripp feels he has not mastered the language; he focuses on error and realizes assignments are not of topics that interest him. Anne Lamott might advise him to re-think academic writing as not boring. She would say to write as honestly and creatively as he can, even on academic topics.

3. Childers’ students have taught her to be able to write for a variety of purposes and audiences; keep the editor inside her head until the last possible moment; write about what you know; collaboration and a real audience make a difference; take risks to write better; allow time to write more than one draft; and be open to criticism.

4. Student answers will vary.
5. It is important for students to find their own voice and style and be comfortable with writing because they need to be able to convey their thoughts, ideas and feelings successfully. The college application essay is a good example because it is a critical piece of writing that represents a person to an unknown audience. Childers demonstrates that with diligence, everyone can be a good writer.

**How I Write**

Evan Miller

1. Miller likes to experiment, have choices, goes through the process of staring at the blank screen, waits to choose the right words and is obsessive over writing. The other writing instructors in this section would agree with his process and his honesty because all have recognized writing to be a difficult task.

2. The “Latin class” literary devices Miller says he uses are known as chiasmus, a reversal in the order of words in two otherwise parallel phrases; synecdoche, which is a term used when you speak of a part of something but mean the whole thing; and tricolon crescens, which is a three-part increase of emphasis or enlargement of meaning. These devices could help improve his essays by elevating his style and varying his sentence structure.

3. He describes wrestling with opening sentences and diction to create the perfect sentence for each context. He’s also very careful to let the paper build; however, he acknowledges that some styles work better than others.

4. His style in this essay is quite casual, but honest. It seems to be a piece directed to new writers or any writer looking for a fresh approach. Students may find it to be indecisive, but he’s not claiming to be an expert, just sharing his method.
FINDING THE RIGHT WORDS

The Case for Short Words
Richard Lederer

1. The “big things” that small words describe are night and day, love and hate, war and peace, life and death. These are abstract and complicated issues that already require analysis, so describing them with bigger words is not necessary.

2. Group work assignment to come up with other cliches and commonplace statements. It would seem like these sayings require small words so that the proverbs are easier to recall.

3. Open to evaluation. The examples that he gives are heavy on imagery and the assignments do not seem constrained since the writing is quite descriptive and creative.

4. Open to discussion and personal examples.

5. Students most likely did not realize that the introductory paragraphs used only one-syllable words; furthermore, they probably read these paragraphs with ease and understood the advice and ideas being conveyed.

Saying is Believing
Patricia O’Conner

1. Open to discussion; ask students to list their favorite writers and if their favorites are “good.” Note O’Conner’s advice to read with a “felonious mind” since students’ favorite writers may be ones whose style they emulate.

2. Student answers will vary.
3. Many people may feel intimidated by the literary canon and think that “great” writing is not mainstream writing that can be enjoyed. Students can agree or disagree with this statement about being brainwashed and build off of their responses to Lederer’s points about short words getting the job done better than “big” ones.

4. O’Conner’s list endorses active voice in items 1, 5, 7, 8, and 11. In most writing situations, active voice is preferable to passive. Overuse of passive voice can cause readers to lose interest or to become confused. Sentences in active voice are generally--though not always--clearer and more direct than those in passive voice because you know who is doing the action.

5. Student answers will vary.

How to Write with Style
Kurt Vonnegut

1. Answers will vary.

2. Vonnegut realizes that these essays were not “magnificent for datedness or foreignness, but for saying precisely what their authors meant them to say” (paragraph 16). He understands that his teachers did not want him to sound precisely like these authors but rather to appreciate how they wrote accurately, how they selected just the right word, and how they made words relate to one another “unambiguously, rigidly, like parts of a machine.”

3. The article is geared to reach and interest the average reader. The piece is short and every paragraph counts; the prose is straightforward and simple; and there is a fresh personal element in the selections in which Vonnegut tells anecdotes about himself.

4. All students will recognize Shakespeare and Joyce. Unfortunately, they probably also associate them with difficult metaphorical language. Vonnegut chooses them to show that they wrote sentences
that were almost childlike in their simplicity and, in fact, tended to write simply even when their subjects were most profound. He does. True to his native Indianapolis English, his advice is direct and “unornamental.”

5. Vonnegut writes in paragraph 14 that if your first language “happens not to be standard English, and if it shows itself when you write standard English, the result is usually delightful, like a very pretty girl with one eye that is green and one that is blue.” And in paragraph 9, “Joyce, when he was frisky, could put together a sentence as intricate and glittering as a necklace for Cleopatra.” In paragraph 12 there are the similes, “like a band saw cutting galvanized tin” and “a vocabulary as unornamental as a monkey wrench.” These metaphors and similes contribute personal humor and entertainment to the essay.

**Clichés, Anyone?**
James Isaacs

1. Student answers will vary. Review paragraphs 6 and 7 for examples of how Isaacs taps into our common knowledge of clichés.

2. It is most likely that this article’s humor would not translate to a non-American audience because each language and culture has its own unique history, slang, and/or clichés. With regards to audiences from the United Kingdom and Ireland, they might understand more of Isaacs’ thesis, primarily because of the broadcast of American television shows and movies there that would not require subtitles. They would hear the clichés firsthand and be more familiar with them, although they would still have their own expressions, as well as their own “version” of the commencement address.

3. Open to discussion, but one reason why clichés are used is to introduce a topic into a conversation.

4. Isaacs’ message, in keeping with this chapter’s theme on writing, is that writers should always attempt to be unique and voice original
ideas and arguments. Depending on clichés as support is weak logic as they do not “say anything.”

5. Student answers will vary.

6. Isaacs’ idea about the commencement speech is that it is formulaic, no matter who delivers it, but students can debate this point with examples of their own or by suggesting hypothetical speakers whose speeches might be unique and cliché-free.
Chapter 3
Politically Speaking

POLITICAL WORD PLAY

How to Detect Propaganda
Institute for Propaganda Analysis

1. The definition of propaganda appears in italics. The first set of people (“individuals or groups”) takes a specific action: it designs propaganda. The action is deliberate, and the goal is specific: to influence a second group of people. This influence could also be read as persuasion, motivation, or (at its most Machiavellian) control. While the first group seems to come up with the ideas, the second group is capable only of accepting or rejecting those ideas—it does not generate its own ideas or transform the ideas handed to it. The first group seems to be dependent to some extent on the sanctions or whims of the second group; influence is necessary to achieve the “predetermined end” or goal. The first group seems to be smaller than the other because it does not seek overt coercion of the second group to achieve its goals.

   It may be worth noting too that by the end of the article the authors have implicitly identified their readership as the second group—which is passive, larger, and possible dumber, and whose minds are in danger of being manipulated—by using “us” and “we,” plural second-person pronouns, rather than a third-person designation.

2. Student responses will vary since the authors do not tag each instance with the word emotion. Nevertheless, students should be able to pick out the terms that name specific emotions or to synthesize a brief discussion of the emotions, and then to examine the way propaganda plays on them.
Examples: Name-calling “appeals to our hate and fear” (paragraph 7). Glittering generalities appeals “to our emotions of love, generosity and brotherhood” (paragraph 10). Transfer plays on our desire to “respect and revere” important institutions and symbols. Testimonial may need some synthesis—the device seems to use roughly the same emotional ploy as transfer, but references well-known people rather than institutions. Plain folks appeals to the emotional need to feel connected to a community. Card stacking is a bit different in that the device doesn’t appeal to a specific emotion per se; rather, it omits, gilds, or conveniently ignores references that may evoke unpleasant associations. Finally, bandwagon hits roughly the same nerve as the plain folks device: a need to feel a sense of belonging. Bandwagon seems more insidious, however, as it uses flattery to access the “fears and hatreds” of the community.

3. Open for discussion. With this question students might start refining their idea of who generates propaganda, under what circumstances, and what function it plays in their lives. They may or may not decide that school-based slang is propaganda, especially since an important implication (never overtly stated) is that those who produce propaganda have relatively more power than those who are subject to it. However, students can begin articulating why it is or is not.

4. They are similar in that both call for us to make a judgment “without examining the evidence” (end paragraph 10). They are different in that name calling has a negative judgment (“reject and condemn”) as its goal, whereas glittering generalities has a positive judgment (“accept and approve”). Both devices use words to “stir up our emotions and to befog our thinking” (paragraph 12). By implication, both turn on simplistic evaluations, an insistence that something is either good or bad.

Student observations of additional features may vary. Both seem to be rooted in a potent xenophobia, a fear of outsiders such as the Pope, or those who more vaguely don’t subscribe to “the American way.” Both involve labeling a program or phenomenon with an abstract term
that is so impossibly large and baggy that it can be reshaped and prodded to “mean” something different depending on how the speaker contextualizes it.

5. This question will probably be much easier if students can insert an event or a person with relevance to their own lives. With transfer, they might be invited to think about television beer commercials aired during major sports events; with testimonial, sports heroes’ endorsements of various products should be plentiful. Other venues could include musicians or movie stars. A good example of plain folks may be a student-government candidate. Also the device can be identified in antidrug or anti–unsafe sex television promotions by stars of MTV or television shows that appeal to young adults.

6. Student responses will vary. The point of this question is to suggest to students that using these pernicious-looking tactics is actually a normal and frequent human activity. The child who wants permission from a parent to attend a party will use the card-stacking device (without actually lying) in order to make the event seem more tightly regulated than it may in fact be. Bandwagon has been institutionalized in the high school prom. How otherwise would a sane parent let 17- and 18-year-olds stay out until dawn in rented limousines? And any teacher who has allowed one student to turn in a late paper assignment without penalty knows how quickly the next assignment threatens to snowball into an orgy of bandwagon complaints about former lenience and favoritism.

7. The propagandist, according to the authors, “is trying to ‘put something across,’ good or bad, whereas the scientist is trying to discover truth and fact.” The propagandist doesn’t seem to believe whatever his or her message might be; truth and fact are irrelevant or, at the very least, are subordinate to the goal of promoting specific action. By implication, the propagandist’s message is often cloaked in illusion, which willfully disregards truth and fact.

The scientist, on the other hand, seems concerned exclusively with truth and fact, as if these qualities were available to be discovered rather than created and shaped by language. Truth and fact, which are
the subject of the scientist’s search, are beyond the pale of belief and disbelief, and apparently beyond the corrupting influence of connotation-laden language. Although the authors never make it explicit, the implication is that truth and fact are always socially desirable, although they perhaps need an occasional sugarcoating of propaganda to be palatable to the public at large.

The authors give the scientist a decided ethical edge when they advocate that the propagandist must be subjected to “the searchlight of scientific scrutiny.” Science here becomes the gatekeeper to determine which propaganda is “socially desirable” and which is not, since propagandists who are churning out undesirable material will presumably gnash their teeth and wither as the searchlight hits them.

8. Propaganda that is “socially desirable” promotes “good” ideas—a glittering generality if there ever was one. Just who gets to say what is a “good” idea and what is not is, of course, the rub in this formulation. The authors sidestep this problem quite neatly, however, by a bandwagon assumption that everyone will agree to core values. Having students challenge the socially desirable propaganda they cite from their own experience may help expose contradictions in this term. Safe-sex propaganda should generate some heated debates. Stopping the spread of HIV transmission is (we should hope) a desirable goal for most students. But does advocating condom use for consenting adults give tacit approval to active sexuality? Does advocating needle-exchange programs give tacit approval to drug use? At what age group should safe-sex propaganda be aimed: college, high school, middle school, or younger?

Yes, desirable propaganda uses all the devices listed in this article. It might be an interesting exercise to run through the examples the text supplies and ask students whether each one is good or bad, desirable or not.

9. The difference between a bad name and a slur is that the bad name takes a neutral, descriptive noun (Communist, atheist, conservative) and invests it with a negative meaning. This shift of a noun’s meaning into connotative gray areas seems to be at the heart of the authors’
discussion. A slur, on the other hand, is not an “in-group” label gone sour through malfeasance in the hands of a propagandist; its primary intention is to insult or inflict harm on the group designated. The difference between the two blurs considerably over time, as the authors’ brief discussion of heretic suggests. Their use of Klansman as a supposedly neutral, descriptive term also demonstrates such change. Furthermore, words such as "nigger" and "queer" can be used by members within the group so designated without the implication of insult. (See the Naylor and Faderman essays.) Thus, the effect of name calling depends to some extent on who the audience for propaganda is assumed to be. To call someone “politically correct” can be high praise or deep excoriation depending on who is sending and receiving the message.

10. The article is clearly addressed to American citizens who consider themselves intelligent. It probably wasn’t written for propagandists themselves, although one subsidiary purpose might be to put the evil doers who are generating socially undesirable propaganda on notice. Scientists and professors were probably not among the primary target audience either, as these groups would be self-reflexively aware of their own communicative purposes and practices.

The authors assume that readers are media consumers who daily encounter all kinds of texts and broadcasts, as enumerated in the final paragraph. Hence they are urban, relying on broadly distributed, varied forms of mass communication that are easily accessible. They are not uncritical of these media, but they lack sophisticated training that will help them filter out and discriminate among the various overt messages, subtexts, implications, and emotional ploys that specialists can use to manipulate them. These readers welcome the pamphlet because it will help them feel even better about their ability to experience personal well-being and to contribute to their community’s well-being. They occasionally lapse into bias, vanity, or lazy reliance on emotion rather than reason; however, they earnestly desire to be good.
Politics and the English Language
George Orwell

1. Orwell laments that “staleness of imagery” and “lack of precision” are killing the English language. Following paragraph 4, he discusses four categories of linguistic problems: dying metaphors, false limbs, pretentious diction, and meaningless words.

2. A euphemism is a figure of speech in which an indirect or inoffensive statement is substituted for a direct, blunt, or unpleasant one. From the Persian Gulf War we have inherited some of the following:
   - softening up: killing the enemy, or destroying its fighting ability
   - air support: bombing
   - interdiction: surprise attack
   - collateral damage: the killing of civilians
Job titles such as sanitation engine, beautician, dental hygienist, mortician, and administrative assistant are other examples of euphemisms.

3. Each of his six rules springs from Orwell’s belief that good writing is clear writing and that the writer should choose words that communicate precisely the meaning intended. But he says, in paragraph 19, that we should also avoid “fake simplicity and the attempt to make written English colloquial.” So, by rule 6, Orwell means that writers should not adhere to the first five rules at the risk of sacrificing clarity of meaning. One may, for instance, strive to avoid clichés and dead metaphors by attempting to find original expressions. Yet “hunting in disturbed woods” make the cliché “fishing in troubled waters” a sentimental favorite.

4. Most students will agree that Orwell is being modest.

5. Orwell most often attacks the intellectual left in this essay. Of the five examples cited in paragraph 3, he cites one obvious political tract, a Communist pamphlet. In paragraph 7, he attacks Marxist jargon; in 12 he gives examples of typical left-wing invectives and metaphors.
(e.g., “Fascist”); paragraphs 13 and 14 specifically criticize “some comfortable English professor defending Russian totalitarianism.” In the last paragraph, he seems accuse socialists of flagrant and habitual misuse of the term Fascist. He also pays little attention to the rhetoric of the political right. However, while Orwell was against the kind of totalitarianism in Communist Russia, he was not a conservative either. He was a member of the Socialist party in England. Animal Farm and 1984 were expressions of contempt for Stalin-like regimes.

6. The first paragraph sounds cynical about the state of the English language. He uses strong language—“Our civilization is decadent and our language . . . must inevitably share in the general collapse.” He heightens the cynical tone with analogies to the man who drinks because he feels himself a failure, then fails all the more because he drinks. But what follows is a statement that “the process is reversible” (paragraph 2). His examples in paragraph 3 clearly illustrate his point, but his tone is less cynical and bitter than it is dismayed that established writers could crank out such gobbledygook. In other words, I see a spirited, honest, and concerned man of principles who sees that his task is not that of some Jeremiah, but of a rebel leader who needs his converts and therefore must entertain with sarcasm while fingering the opposition.

7. Each of the examples illustrates the staleness of imagery and lack of precision that he subdivides and discusses in the subsequent sections. He refers to them in paragraph 12 and thus tightens the discussion.

8. There is less appeal to emotion than to reason. He sounds angry, yet the anger is often barbed with witty, fresh sarcasm. His cynical stance is balanced by a hope to defend the language against the slovenly. The fact that he has written the essay is enough evidence for his optimism.

9. He begins in paragraph 13, although he prepares for it all along by citing examples of bad political phrasing. The first 12 paragraphs build up the evidence for “ugly and inaccurate” writing. Therefore, by the time we reach the key offenders—political writers—we are already
persuaded of the dishonesty of language manipulators and the immoral possibilities of such abuse.

The Pep Talk
Hugh Rank

1. The “pep talk” is that pattern of persuasion used to organize and direct the energy of a group toward committed collective action: commonly a sequence of (1) the Threat, (2) the Bonding, (3) the Cause, (4) the Response. Coaches and sales managers use pep talk to encourage their “teams” to greater efforts to sell more, to do more, or to beat rivals.

2. If directed to a specific audience, the “pep talk” can persuade the public towards a committed collective action. However, if observers come in at different times and are only exposed to certain fragments, then the speech may become less compelling. Therefore, the pep talk requires work on behalf of both the speaker and listener.

3. The pattern of the pep talk is detailed in paragraph 4 and is three-fold: the intent, content and consequences. Whether beneficial or malevolent, the pattern will remain the same.

4. The pep talk can be beneficial as the means to good effects. To incite the public to support “good causes,” human energies can be organized toward collective action by skillful combination of words and images (paragraph 14).

5. The pep talk seeks a committed collective action, for a person to join with others for a cause. The pitch merely leads to a simple response or transaction.

6. Students will find Rank persuasive and informative. He urges readers and listeners to be responsible citizens and analyze the pep talk they hear in political, religious, ethnic, and social propagandas. He
presents his definitions, facts and observations in an orderly way and even re-caps his main points at the end of the essay.

7. Paragraph 40 describes the similarities between advertising and pep talks. Slick ads “sell candidates” as if they were commercial products. Rank feels this is a borderline case and the public should be wary of personalities who “look like and talk like what the polls say the voters want.”

**Doubts About Doublespeak**
William Lutz

1. Lutz defines doublespeak as “language which pretends to communicate but doesn’t. . . It is language which avoids, shifts, or denies responsibility.” Its purpose is to conceal or prevent thought, especially negative thought.

2. The four types of doublespeak are euphemism, jargon, gobbledygook, and inflated language. The rankings may vary. Also, some students may not agree that all instances of doublespeak are offensive. In this case, the discussion might explore instances in which euphemisms are useful or helpful.

3. Euphemisms are not always negative. In fact, they were developed with certain good intentions and are useful in revealing our society’s deepest fears and anxieties—about sex and death, for example.

4. The practice of elevating job titles might strike some as harmful in that it misrepresents both the job holders and those who come in contact with them. On the other hand, how harmful is it for a garbage collector to be known as a “sanitation engineer”? Such a euphemism may serve in elevating self-esteem.

5. Open for discussion. Students may feel that Lutz has inflated the seriousness of the problem.
6. Lutz opens his piece with examples of doublespeak, immediately setting a tone of critical sarcasm—a tone maintained throughout.

7. Lutz does not address the opposing view at all. Some opponents may feel that there are very real instances when doublespeak is necessary “tact.”

8. One might say that Lutz’s own categories shade into doublespeak. For instance, "gobbledygook" and "bureaucratese" are jargon terms for these phenomena. However, such labels do not seriously weaken his authority.

   Lutz provides many amusing examples. However, he is scanty when it comes to naming sources. For instance, he claims that in Japan baldness is referred to as “hair disadvantaged” (paragraph 12); he also says that members of the Mafia are known as “members of a career-offender cartel” (paragraph 9). However, these quotations are not attributed to any source. Some students might rightfully question Lutz’s reliability as a narrator.

**LANGUAGE AND THE PRESIDENCY**

The Rhetorical Presidency
Robert E. Denton, Jr. and Dan F. Hahn

1. Presidents are special because they lead us, define us, protect us and embody us—and they do so implicitly and explicitly through communication. How a president communicates with the public is an important element in governing the nation. Paragraph 4 expands upon this with the six dimensions of Presidential rhetoric: linguistic, intellectual, psychological, social, ethical and aesthetic.
2. Student answers will vary.

3. Public speeches can inspire, move, and articulate, but also deceive, destroy and exploit. The linguistic devices used in a speech then can reinforce popular beliefs, attitudes and values.

4. Rhetorical communication functions to alter perceptions and assist in formulating beliefs. Once in official power, a president’s daily activities are largely verbal and public and this political consciousness promotes and reinforces the existing political order.

5. The five major functions of political language are: information dissemination, agenda-setting, interpretation and linkage, projection for the future and past, and action stimulation. Students can refer to paragraphs 12-16 for explanations of these five functions.

6. George Edwards’ statement implies, as research also claims, that the higher the approval rating, the more Congress supports presidential decisions. “Presidents want not only to please the public and avoid irritating them but also want to formulate and lead public opinion.” Whether students agree is open to discussion.

7. Student answers will vary.

**Dубя and Me: We’ve Got No Idea**

Ian Frazier

1. Frazier finds watching George W. Bush stressful because he never knew if he was going to make it through a debate without a blunder. “Bush kept everybody in a state of fearful uncertainty and expectation.”

2. Frazier’s tone alternate between all of these descriptions—concerned, troubled, sarcastic, and sympathetic. The audience is sure to be responsive to the human and “real-ness” with which he (and Dubya) speak.
3. Quayle was too “deer in headlights” for Frazier and the American public. George W. is more of the common man who guesses at questions and speaks without full knowledge of the topic. Paragraph 12 describes “W Bush as a more average person, unremarkable as the generation to which he belongs.”

4. Student answers will vary.

5. As a world leader, the President should be different because he controls the safety and danger of the public at large. “Cluelessness multiplied by power is what puts the secret message of dizzying terror in W. Bush’s eyes.”

6. The “New” refers to our fragmented postmodern society where “people who don’t know what they’re doing often get by on their supposed freshness and spontaneity.” The connection to what and how we learn and say is that if everything is “new” all the time, ignorance is accepted as routine.

7. “Inspired” or divine speech is the message of the Bible passage and Frazier connects it to his argument that speakers should be more prepared, especially the President!

8. While he makes it clear that he voted for Gore and appreciated his certainty and restful approach, Frazier does sympathize with Bush since he’s an average guy who, while “lost,” is “more real and more live.” The title agrees with this sympathetic view as it acknowledges that he and Dubya (and most men of their generation) get through life walking on this tightrope. His final lines attest to this cautious thinking: “Together, maybe, they will still accomplish something great. Or maybe the best we can hope for is just not to do too much wrong.”
The Making of the Speech
D.T. Max

1. Max feels this language is common and undisciplined and objects to these words because they denote a feeling of being lost and scared (which is not Presidential!).

2. Max means the President has to be able to say the right thing, especially at a time of national crisis. Refer to “The Rhetorical Presidency” earlier in the chapter because it states that the President should be straightforward, not too slight or brief or too literary. Whether students agree or not is open to discussion. Class discussion could address the ethics of "political spin."

3. Student answers will vary.

4. Creating a presidential speech should acknowledge where to give the speech, what the main focus should be, who the audience is and their possible responses. The speech should have an authoritative tone but also include overtures of compassion.

5. Paragraphs 17 and 18 detail Karen P. Hughes’ role of taking notes to determine what the President wants to say and then integrating them into the speech writer’s product. She is responsible for making his voice more concrete in its compassion.

6. He likes his speeches to make a clear point. He hates redundancies so his edits tend to simplify. He saw this particular speech as a chance to lead so he did not want to include a closing quote from FDR. The setting was the chambers of Congress and the speech was ultimately well received there.

7. Bureaucratese is a style of language characterized by jargon and euphemism that is used especially by bureaucrats, or those administrative officials who rigidly devote themselves to the details of
procedure. Bush objects to this type of language use because it deviates from his preferred straightforward style of speech format.

8. Student answers will vary and responses should be shared in class discussion.

Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People
George W. Bush

1. Student answers will vary and examples should be shared in class discussion. It is obvious from Max’s preceding essay that Bush likes short paragraphs, simple statements, and straightforward language.

2. If doublespeak is defined as language that pretends to communicate but doesn’t and avoids, shifts, or denies responsibility, it is doubtful that students will find any examples in Bush’s speech since he objects to such bureaucratese.

3. The enemies of freedom are Al Queda, Osama bin Laden, and the Taliban regime. He identifies these enemies by answering America’s question, “Who attacked our country?”

4. Bush describes the terrorists has murderers and radicals, plotters of evil and destruction; therefore, he is more forceful than politically correct in this speech. Paragraph 20 is diplomatic in its demands on the Taliban, although they are not open to negotiation or discussion.

5. Yes, Ian Frazier would react differently to this example of language use from Bush because the President carefully constructed this speech from his own views. It was well-rehearsed and delivered with a matter-of-fact tone. There is no way he is clueless in this situation, and nor could he be.

6. Open to discussion. The applause markers do help future readers of the speech note where Congress agreed, since they are representatives of the American people.
7. The audience for this speech was Congress as well as the American people and a world-wide leaders. Students can refer to paragraph 24 where Bush states, “They hate what we see right here in this chamber—a democratically elected government” as well as paragraphs 30 and 36 for his uses of a collective “our” and “we,” respectively.

8. Aside from those who worked in the World Trade Center, many police and firemen were killed in their attempts to rescue, thereby increasing the number of victims of the terrorist attack. The President mentions George Howard’s police badge (a symbol) to appeal to American's pride in rescue heroes like him and as a “reminder of [the] lives that ended…”

CASE STUDY: TERRORISM AND THE WAR OF WORDS

Semantics of Murder
Amir Taheri

A True Jihad?
Jim Guirard

1. In the West a martyr is someone who dies for his/her devotion to religious beliefs. However, honoring human bombs as martyrs is impossible in the Islamic world because the faith expressly forbids suicide and human sacrifice.

2. Aside from “martyr,” shahid most closely means “witness.” The word indicates that individuals cannot decide to become martyrs—that choice belongs only to God. Suicide bombers, then, cannot be accurately described with this word.

3. Taheri is against making excuses or false defenses for suicide bombers. He presents facts in the last three paragraphs to prove the suicide bombings are not desperate acts, but organized ones committed by brainwashed young adults.
4. *Etsesh ’had* means affidavit or conducting “martyr-like” operations. This word is now used to describe the actions of the suicide bombers because it is the only way terror’s apologists can attempt to justify them. The term is used to circumvent the impossibility of regarding suicide bombers as martyrs for Islam.

5. Both authors’ use of Arabic words help to distinguish the sight differences in meaning. They further define these terms in order to bring to light the way the Arabic language is connected to the Islamic faith.

6. His purpose is to draw a distinction between those who support and rationalize and those who condemn and oppose terrorism. The effectiveness of these questions is open to class discussion.

7. Semantics refers to the meaning or interpretation of a word or sentence. Depending on cultural and religious definitions, Taheri’s editorial makes it clear that we need to choose our words carefully when describing terrorism, suicide and murder. Other examples can extend this discussion.

**Fighting Words: The War Over Language**

Jon Hooten

1. Hooten describes the Gulf War as a sterile encounter, not a full-blown, machine-gun shooting, prisoner-taking, horror-story war and for these reasons, we now think about war rather thoughtlessly. As war becomes more distant, the “language of war” becomes regular speech.

2. These words include: dearth, deploy, defense, embattled and infiltrated. How mainstream these words are is open to student discussion.
3. Pop culture thinks nothing of invoking the language of conflict to describe anything and paragraphs 7 and 8 include examples of this claim.

4. His tone is persuasive and authoritative so to convince readers and writers to choose words more carefully. The final paragraph of the essay suggests we use the language of war properly so not to become “our own worse enemy.”

5. The wars of the last twenty years have been “non-war-like wars” and non-confrontational. Examples include the war on drugs (see paragraph 11) which is a war against a perpetual opponent. For this reason, we have forgotten the literal phenomenon of war.

6. Because the enemy does not exist in only one place, the war against terrorism cannot be controlled by laws and will be perpetually re-born in creative and wily ways. Like the war on drugs, trying to win the war against terrorism is like “racing toward a finish like that doesn’t exist.” He qualifies his claim by pointing out that terrorism is not a localized menace. Generalizing the evils of terrorism with such metaphors and language of war is to “shroud the faces, politics and religion behind the acts.” “It ignores that which provokes the violence”

7. Student answers will vary.

**A Lot to Learn**

David Brudnoy

1. What Brudnoy means is best described in paragraph 2 in reference to the television exposure, “Absorbing the event itself was a Herculean effort...It was as if we who were alive couldn’t let go of those who had perished unless we watched their deaths as if we too died.” He
does not mean that we literally did not have the words; he means that we were so distraught that the only words we chose were “either too anemic or too overblown.”

2. The baby talk he objects to is the use of the term “war on terrorism.” He feels a more appropriate term is the “war on Islamic terrorism.” He discusses the appropriateness of the term in paragraph 10 when he emphatically states, “We have yet to figure out how to be intellectually honest about the full reality of the Enemy as Islamic lunacy in its many forms.”

3. His use of italics is to emphasize the words and phrases chosen to describe the events of September 11, which is an effective way to call attention to the language in order to evaluate its power and appropriateness. Students can review the chapter for other essays whose authors used italics to highlight those terms that post-September 11 have become part of our national vocabulary.

4. His tone is disenchanted and frustrated. He feels we are terrorizing ourselves with the changes we’ve made since 9/11, all in order to create a (false) sense of security and unity. His Boston Phoenix audience is one of a more liberal than conservative persuasion.

5. Open to research and subsequent discussion. Using the term Islamic terrorism seems too risky for politicians and even Brudnoy states it is “an idea fit only for fabulists,” despite the fanaticism of Islamic terrorists described in paragraph 10.

6. He feels America is being foolishly polite and not acting out against the enemy as we should. Paragraph 15 details the apprehension with which we live since America has failed “to synchronize the necessary ideas with the necessary actions.” In order to effectively fight terrorism, we need to act with a “terrible [but] swift sword.”
1. Self-evident is defined as requiring no proof or explanation; therefore, Difranco is insinuating that America should have expected such an event to occur. See response to question 7 to extend this analysis.

2. Student responses will vary. Difranco’s intention seems to have been to anger or warn her fellow 20 and 30-somethings to not be manipulated by politics or the media.

3. Open to discussion and a group re-writing exercise. Attempt to turn Difranco’s poem into an essay and insert transitions/phrases if necessary while keeping the meaning intact.

4. Her lack of capital letters emphasizes the simplicity of language and the line breaks require the reader to keep reading and follow her train of thought so to understand the poem’s overall message.

5. Student answers will vary.

6. Stanza 15 lists other terrorist events—the initial World Trade Center bombing and Oklahoma City—to prove, “the plot was obvious and in everybody’s face.” She includes these other events to tell her audience that 9/11 was bound to happen but America dropped the ball.

7. The truths listed are: (1) George Bush is not president (2) America is not a true democracy (3) the media is not fooling anyone. She chooses these because this is how she feels the events of 9/11 (its causes and effects) can best be described. Stanza 9 states that “peace is in the form of a dream.”
Nameless Event
William Safire

1. September 11 is a nameless event because how do you describe something so horrific? Attack on America is too general since Pearl Harbor was also an attack, so the obstacles when naming include consideration of setting, word choice and use of powerful, but universally adopted, language.

2. No new name has emerged, 9/11 or the full September 11 is still used. It is open to discussion whether or not students think a new name will be created.

3. Open to discussion.

4. Student answers will vary and should be shared in class discussion.
Chapter 4
The Art of Conversation

HE SAYS, SHE SAYS: DIFFERENCES IN DISCOURSE

Women Talk Too Much
Janet Homes

1. The opening proverbs set up Homes’ claim that women do talk too much and that it is seen as bothersome to men. It is also implied that women do not have much of value to say. The number of these proverbs is remarkable and students can discuss whether any are familiar to them or not as well as the ones they like and/or dislike most and why. They can also discuss the author’s favorite, “The tongue is the sword of a woman and she never lets it become rusty” and whether they agree it attributes power rather than noise to the woman speaker.

2. Students should refer to paragraphs 20-23 for Homes’ comparison of context and setting. In brief, she states that talking in public to inform and persuade people enhances social power and status while speaking in private contexts is more relaxed.

3. The proverbs mostly deal with private/relationship situations where the women’s talk is stereotyped as nagging. Therefore, the assumption is that the home is not a place where talk is valued.

4. Student answers will vary.

5. Paragraph 25 details these differences and states that women use talk to develop personal relationships and maintain family connections and friendships more often than men who make claims to status or to directly influence others in public contexts. Students can openly
discuss Homes’ conclusions and offer their own experiences and observations of getting and holding the floor.

No Detail is Too Small for Girls Answering a Simple Question
Tony Kornheiser

1. Student answers may be influenced by gender, which is a fact that can be explored in class. Males may feel that some (much) of the information females relate is unimportant, while females may place more importance on the body of information conveyed. There does seem to be some truth in Kornheiser’s assessment that women and men convey and interpret information differently, but not that one “dispenses it without discrimination.”

2. Perhaps because women feel that mathematics skills are more valued in our society than communication skills, it is necessary to defend the idea that girls are good at math too. Or that because a majority of power is still held by males, they are strive to defend girls to balance this power. Class discussion could address if this stereotype hurts girls or not.

3. Kornheiser says that he prefers male communication styles. However, his essay is very exploratory and reflective which are traits that he seems to attribute to female communication.

4. Kornheiser’s tone is sarcastic and slightly exaggerated but also detailed and informative. He assumes that his audience has gone through similar conversations and can relate to his experience, even if they are not parents. He also assumes that they know the stereotypes he speaks of and, for this reason, that females will see the humor in this piece and not be offended. In fact, he is male-bashing in a way because the simplicity with which the male speaks could be seen as a negative trait. Male and female students can offer their opinions on the article’s appeal, especially with regard to its humor.
Sex Differences
Ronal Macaulay

1. He feels that this work—especially that done in the last 20 years—has been a “growth industry” for scholars who have reached conclusions that should be obvious (paragraph 3).

2. While Macaulay makes a valid point about fiction as a conduit for cultural constructs, there are some problems in the examples he gives. He presents them as if they are representative of all fiction, saying his list is derived from “an examination of several novels” (paragraph 2), yet he does not identify authors, dates of publication, or literary contexts for any of the expressions on his list.

3. He mentions factors of class difference, such as those seen in Glasgow, New York, and Norwich (paragraph 5); gender power differential observed in the United States; and the influence of social groups, such as once existed in male Oxonians (paragraph 10).

4. Jespersen’s work, however flawed, is important to Macaulay’s consideration of the topic since Jespersen’s scholarly work held sway for several decades after its publication.

5. Not really. In his concluding paragraph, Macaulay cautions readers that even contemporary scholars can reinforce the misconceptions of the past.

6. Open for discussion. Students should comment on the differences in oral and written language. They may note specific differences in oral language that accompany being presented live, tape-recorded, or in a classroom situation where one might not expect to have his words repeated in exact form. They may also mention the fine distinctions implied in the suggested academic audiences—as in whether the speaker is addressing his peers, speaking to a general audience of educated listeners, or seeking to instruct a class of graduate or undergraduate students.
“I’ll Explain It to You”: Lecturing and Listening
Deborah Tannen

1. Tannen uses three anecdotes based on personal experiences to describe the lecturer-listener relationship. In each instance, the man controls the conversation with a monologue explaining detailed factual information. The woman spends a great deal of time being an appreciative audience. The question of whether this pattern is typical of male-female conversations could lead to some interesting class discussion. Perhaps each student could spend 10 minutes writing an account of a recent conversation that does or does not typify this pattern. Then, each could read the paragraphs aloud to the class or to a smaller group which could, in turn, make some generalizations about this pattern. About the symmetry, Tannen says women and men fall into this unequal relationship because of differences in interactional habits. Women seek to built rapport and, thus, downplay their expertise. Men value center stage and the feeling of knowing more. Thus, they seek opportunities to disseminate information.

2. In cases where the woman was the expert and the man the non-expert, women showed support for the non-expert men they were talking to, saying things such as “Yeah” and “That’s right.” Observers often rated the male non-expert as the dominant one in the conversation. In the cases where men acknowledged the woman as an expert, they did so in a tone of resentment: “So, you’re the expert.” According to Tannen, women do not wield their power but try to hide it by highly supportive behavior. Men, on the other hand, see expertise as inviting challenge.

3. Students might agree with Tannen’s analysis that when men challenge women’s authority as they would a man’s, it is a “sign of respect and equal treatment, rather than a lack of respect and discrimination.” On the other hand, they might see such an explanation as excusing discriminatory treatment. It is difficult to imagine that men who habitually dominate and disregard women’s contributions to a conversation are unaware of what they are doing. Tannen herself
points out that in conversations in which women are experts and men not, men refer to the woman’s expertise disparagingly.

4. Tannen says that men end up listening to a lecture if the other man is in a position of higher status or if he is, for example, a boss or father.

5. Joking enables men to jockey for position and status, to try to hold center stage. Women, says Tannen, do not need to hold center stage and, therefore, don’t need a store of jokes for this purpose.

6. Tannen’s closing remarks strike me as sound, though more difficult to achieve than she indicates. A woman attempting to be more assertive and less reactive may find herself viewed as pushy, bossy, and overbearing. She may not receive reinforcement and might be cut out of conversation, dismissed because she is not playing her typical role. A man, on the other hand, who attempts to be receptive and supportive might find himself dismissed by male peers for being uninteresting, boring, and unsure of himself. Whether male or female, speakers will probably not be immediately rewarded for trying out new conversational styles.

7. Each anecdote shows a woman taking the role of listener while being lectured to by a man. Each example is a variation on a theme showing subtle differences. In the first, a woman listens to a monologue, bored but so accustomed to playing audience that she fails to recognize how bored she really is. In the second example, a personal experience of the author’s, Tannen takes an active role in a conversation inquiring about life in Greece during World War II and offers observations based on personal experience on life in contemporary Greece. She is aware of her boredom when the man focuses on facts about Greek history. In the third example, a man earnestly explains to a woman the symbolism in a feminist work of art. Ironically, though one might expect the woman to play the role of expert here, it is the man who does so. The final example shows a
neighbor of Tannen’s focusing on a factual explanation of what the
author saw as a magical moment: the flickering of fireflies.

EXPLORING THE LANGUAGE OF VISUALS:
Men are from Belgium, Women are from New Brunswick
Roz Chast

1. Chast’s cartoon operates on several levels; the most obvious one is
that men and women never really say what they mean. Honesty, then,
might lead to greater respect between the genders—or greater conflict.
It also depicts the stereotypical female cooking dinner for the male,
and the expectations one has of the other in such roles. The title itself
refers to the best-selling book Men Are from Mars, Women Are from
Venus. Knowledge of this book and its topic makes the cartoon even
more funny.

2. Student answers will vary.

3. Perhaps Chast chose these locations because both geographically
and culturally they are worlds apart. Belgium is also a bilingual
country whose Dutch and French linguistic differences have led to
chronic political instability, while New Brunswick, NJ, conjures up
images of suburban America. Also, the female cartoonist may be
commenting on how men speak a foreign language, while women
strive to figure them out.

4. Open to discussion.

Nonverbal Behavior: Culture, Gender, and the Media
Teri Kwal Gamble and Michael W. Gamble

1. The culture of a people modifies their use of nonverbal cues and
“contact cultures” to promote interaction and encourage displays of
warmth, closeness, and availability. When communicating with a
member of the opposite gender from a contact culture, it is important
to be aware of their behaviors of standing close to each other during
conversation, seeking maximum sensory experience, and touching each other frequently.

2. Male nonverbal and verbal communication exhibits more assertive behaviors, while women tend to act and respond more. Students should discuss this assessment for interruption with examples from their personal experience.

3. When men speak, they tend to try to establish authority by looking and by inflections and volume of voice. But when they are not talking, they look and listen less. It is likely that they are composing their thoughts for how to segue into the next topic of conversation, while a woman would respond and continue the discussion.

4. Student answers will vary.

LET’S TALK ABOUT IT: CONVERSATION IN ACTION

The Social Basis of Talk
Ronald Wardhaugh

1. Wardhaugh’s main argument is that social conversation is a cooperative undertaking in which two or more people are exchanging words for a reason. Therefore, the selection of topics, opportunity to speak, feeling at ease when speaking and achieving a sense of orderliness and adequacy make up the participants’ expectations.

2. We “consider” the person with whom we converse by being aware of that person’s feelings but Wardhaugh reminds us that this should be a “reciprocal undertaking.” The participants should both be conscious of each other’s needs, particularly the need not to be offended.

3. One risk in conversation is that one of the participants can emerge from the conversation diminished in some way. Open to discussion.
4. Without trust in a conversation we would have little or no shared ground on which to build, and communication would become next to impossible. The role of trust is open to discussion among students. The author reminds readers not to trust too much as well. He feels one should exercise powers of judgment and make sound decisions constantly.

5. The successful conversationalist possesses a wide variety of skills: well developed feelings for what you can and cannot say and when you can and cannot speak; knowledge of how to use words to do things and what words you can use in certain circumstances; and the ability to supplement and reinforce what you choose to say with other appropriate behaviors such as movements, gestures, posture and gaze.

6. The basic conditions necessary for all conversations to “prevail” are mutual trust, sincerity of participants, validity of everyday appearances and commonsense.

7. The author’s thesis is that successful conversations exploit many of the same principles that underlie all forms of social existence. While he does offer some examples, students may find his essay repetitive and overly commonsensical at times. Answering the latter half of this question can become a groupwork assignment in which students note places where more examples could be used to make the essay more effective.

8. As he closes the essay, Wardhaugh comments that “Conversation is a form of ‘coping’ behavior which relies heavily on just those same sets of assumptions that allows us to drive safely, drink water in a restaurant, cash a government check, and even go to sleep at night.” This statement proves that conversation is a routine where we meet each other on common ground and everyone leaves satisfied.
Some Friends and I Started Talking: Conversation and Social Change
Margaret J. Wheatley

1. The opening example is specific enough to set the tone of her essay as one that is serious, informative and persuasive. It sets up her argument of “simple conversation giving birth to actions that can change lives and restore our faith in the future.”

2. Student answers will vary.

3. The reasons Wheatley gives are that some of us never have been invited to share our ideas and opinions; we have often been told to be quiet so others could tell you what to think; and that some may have become soured on conversations. Students can add their own reasons to this list.

4. “True conversation” is a timeless and reliable way for humans to think together. While students can offer their own examples of such conversation, Wheatley lists telling stories, getting people eager to talk and respond and eventually to evoke social change.

5. Their conversations differ in that Wheatley sees the potential for social change while Tannen examines the roles men and women play in their conversations with each other. Both authors agree that conversations can become mutually beneficial to the parties involved if they “acknowledge each other as equals” (Wheatley) and “understand the other gender’s speaking style” (Tannen). The two authors also agree that there is a constant need to become better listeners; however, Tannen might disagree with Wheatley’s points from paragraph 13 on since it seems they stem from her experience, which is obviously female, and require too much listening. Tannen strongly argues that “women who find themselves unwillingly cast as the listener should practice propelling themselves out of that position rather than waiting patiently for the lecture to end…and give up the belief that they must wait for the floor to be handed to them.”
Students can work in groups to compare Wheatley and Tannen further as their essays provide many opportunities for them to examine their own speaking, listening and lecturing strategies.

6. Wheatley uses Paulo Freire’s description of what happens when people stop talking to make her point. He states that when the talking stops, people are reduced to the status of things. They stop acting to change things, become passive and allow others to tell them what to do.

**Like, Uptalk?**
James Gorman

1. Gorman defines uptalk at rising intonations at the end of sentences or phrase which makes statements sound like questions. Open to discussion.

2. Such a “phrase final rise” has been documented in Irish, English and South American dialects as well as in 17th Century America. It is used most commonly by upper middle class young women and may be spreading as a result of the popularity of the California Valley Girl talk.

3. Student answers will vary.

4. Open to discussion but if there is a lack of shared knowledge and society is fragmented to the point that no one knows anymore whether another person will have a clue as to what he’s saying, then of course the result will be a conversation of questions. From such questions is a questioning tone to all statements and thus, uptalk.

5. Who he says uses uptalk and his examples punctuated by question marks help to convey the “intonation contour” he speaks of. Evaluating his examples is open to discussion.
6. Gorman does not want to hear uptalk “In cocksure, authoritative occupations” like policework, medical professionals, academics or airline pilots. Uptalk conveys uncertainty and deference to the listener, and you wouldn’t want your surgeon to be uncertain about anything!

7. Being “appalled” at the frequency with which he hears uptalk and describing it as a “character flaw,” both prove that he condemns the linguistic style, even though he claims ambivalence.

The Other Side of E-Mail
Robert Kuttner

1. Kuttner’s opening lines describe one way that e-mail transcends the generation gap: He and his college-age daughter are communicating in a new medium together while she is away from home. In addition to other examples students provide, paragraph 12 notes that people from remote locations can now come together and share ideas.

2. Kuttner believes e-mail is a “thief” because “it deceives us into thinking we have endless additional hours in the day to engage in far-flung communications that we may or may not need or want” (paragraph 2). Life can become more complicated because of e-mail and its “pseudo-urgency that demands instant response” (paragraph 4). We may end up corresponding with people to whom we normally would not call or write, or feel obligated to return e-mail messages from mere acquaintances.

3. Because of the “demand of instant response,” people may not review their responses or the tone of their phrasing. Also, since e-mail is a kind of mail that is intangible, one might even forget that it has been sent and who it might affect. Kuttner compares it to talk radio, but talk radio is heard once and not repeated; e-mail is in writing, which can have more serious affects on the person it is sent to as well as others who might get the message forwarded to them. Another example can be love letters, which were traditionally burned or
returned at the end of a relationship. What if a cache of e-mailed love letters hit the Internet from the computer of a lover scorned?

4. Student answers will vary and depend on how many use e-mail regularly and for what purposes (school, family, friends, etc.).

5. The long-term effects of e-mail’s use on social discourse can include ideas formulated from question 1. Social discourse, however, is more of a bringing together of voices that might not have otherwise come to speak in the same forum. Geographical borders no longer exist, the range of topics is endless, and the rate at which discussions begin and flourish is much more rapid.

6. Building off of responses to question 2, e-mail sometimes comes in droves, or as "spam." Tending an email box is much like tending a garden—-one must pull the unwanted mail from the desired correspondence. Mailboxes need constant tending—removing old messages, responding to new ones, organizing messages that should be kept for reference. Problems may arise if mailboxes fill with unnecessary mail, thereby preventing more important messages from getting through. E-mail forwards consisting of jokes, anecdotes, and chain letters can be time-consuming distractions. And finally, the pressure to attend the electronic mailbox can be daunting, especially if one is a member of an active newsgroup.

**Come in CQ: The Body on the Wire**

Ellen Ullman

1. CQ is the alter-identity of the author’s childhood neighbor, Eugene (refer to paragraphs 3-6). The parallel between CQ and the late-night email user is that both are searching for electronic companionship. Both Eugene and Ullman were happy when talking to someone with similar interests.

2. Paragraphs 9 and 10 detail the author’s experience with daytime and nighttime interaction with a co-worker. In brief, the nighttime
communication is seen as part of a separate universe. During the day, the individuals are all business, but at night they are more caring and willing to give a sympathetic ear to each other.

3. Have students work in small groups and assign each a thread to paraphrase; then analyze the differences and impressions of each. Which type of exchange is easier to follow and which gives more detail about who these people are?

4. Love happened in her substitute body at night, which is a self different from her day persona. At night, the author feels, one is more playful and given to games of innuendo.

5. When Karl and Ellen meet, they continue to have on-line conversations: speak, reply, reply, etc. She also describes how she feels “his face is not there at all, it has so little effect on the flow of “talk.” Adding a face to the voice makes her analyze the pattern of their conversations, where the interpolations would appear, and even what these conversations are based on.

6. Student answers will vary. They may expand upon the discussion that results from question 4 since Ullman describes (paragraph 8) “daytime rules” and how they differ from those at night when “insomniac selves” meet and exist.
Chapter 5
The Language of Humor: What Makes Us Laugh

WHAT’S SO FUNNY?

Outsiders/Insiders
Joseph Boskin

1. Humor is often in the ear of the beholder, or as the headnote states, “What’s funny to one person may draw a blank stare from another and a grimace from somebody else.” Depending on who the speaker and audience happen to be, the “joke” can either reinforce a stereotype or invert it.

2. Paragraph 3 explains, “For if everyday life has an undercurrent or cross-current of the tragic, the main current is material for comedy.” These marginalized groups, “outsiders,” often find humor appealing because it is the only venue for reducing the pressure of a difficult situation. As the first question reminds us, jokes told by the outsiders about themselves serve as a means to invert stereotypes, i.e., to “reshape the configurations of American humor.”

3. Open to discussion. Students can contemplate the humor they see on television told from the dominant (not marginalized) white male perspective. Jerry Seinfeld may serve as a good example because, although he is Jewish, his show dealt with the humor of everyday life situations.

4. “The corrective laugh” is defined in paragraph 5 as a result of protest and resistance—railley. Boskin explains, “Offering a social
commentary that comically displayed the harshness of industrial life, on occasion employing slapstick and satire that plunged into anarchy, the outsiders frequently accomplished the corrective laugh.” This corrective laugh “force[s] Native American culture to take stock of its oppressive policies.”

5. Boskin begins his discussion of using humor as a weapon in paragraph 17. He says that in dealing with oppressors, Jews and African-Americans have worked language as a weapon to offset suspicion of improper thought and hostile action. To avoid the stigma of the savage outsider, humor was used as the medium for a different kind of empowerment. Students can share examples of their own of when humor was used as a weapon to fight back oppression.

6. “Perched on the edge of personal destruction, gallows humor confronts a seemingly hopeless situation.” Such humor has shaped our cultural perspective of what is funny because one can find good news/bad news jokes and sick and disaster cycles to some extent in stand-up comedy, novels, and films. As Boskin states, however, gallows humor has its limitations, but it “can afford an aloofness and ability to rise above any situation, even if only for a few seconds.”

7. Student answers will vary.

8. Female comics had to overcome the obstacle that “women lack a sense of humor.” One explanation for this belief is that “humor is aggression [and] aggression is ‘hard.’ Women have always been supposed to be nice to men.” As the author points out, however, this belief was overturned. First, women employed self-deprecating humor. Later, with the Women’s Movement of the 1970s, “the focus [of women’s humor] dramatically shifted away from the self-deprecatory. Like blacks, women regaled themselves with hostile and aggressive joking, intent on making men squirm.” Now, many female comedians are redefining the script to include “deriding patriarchal institutions, ridiculing male sexual behaviors, [and] plunging into taboos like menstruation, lesbianism, and abortion . . .” (paragraph 30).
Excerpt from The LA LA Awards
Latins Anonymous

1. Self-deprecating comedy is used throughout these skits, as well as parody and sarcasm. Once all comedic devices are identified, students can work in groups to choose examples that support these labels.

2. The tone employed throughout is sarcastic, but it underlines a serious nature as well.

3. Allow students to discuss their opinions about the subject of mixing languages. The class may wish to discuss the connection between culture, stereotypes, and how well we “get the joke.”

4. Some of the stereotypes that are satirized include the lazy Latino, the conquering male, the virgin female, and the salsa-dancing girl. What this piece does best is exaggerate these stereotypes, which highlights the closed-mindedness of white American culture. Such humor by Latinos can work to counter such assumptions and reclaim the stereotypes. One would think that Latins Anonymous wants the statement, “Latin America’s greatest export is its people,” to be taken more seriously.

5. The dancing girls’ movements, speakers’ costumes, and props all depend on visual symbols and cultural stereotypes. However, most of the sketches present a vivid blend of visual cues and spoken language. Students can work in groups, with each group working on a specific sketch, to explore the play’s use of symbols and signs.

In Answer to the Question: Have You Ever Considered Suicide?
Kate Rushin

1. Rushin’s tone is best understood by her use of improper grammar and punctuation. She writes common language—full of slang. The informality of it makes her overall tone casual, but serious in her
message—there is too much she wants to live for to ever consider suicide.

2. The list is made up of things that scare Rushin, as well as things she is scared of losing (electricity). She lists things many people take for granted—food, shelter, and electricity—as well as truly frightening aspects of urban life. She is pointing out the absurdity of the question, and the differences between who may have written the questionnaire and the poverty-stricken people who fill it out.

3. Living in such conditions, the woman of Rushin’s poem is probably anything but frail. She has had to endure a harsh life. But for all the dark humor of the poem, Rushin reveals that even this strong woman can have her moments of overwhelming despair—this is when she needs others to sit with her until such moments pass, and she can go back to worrying about those string beans.

4. Students can discuss their interpretations, although the poem seems to read as a testament to not giving up even in states of hardship, and how to use humor as a means to deal with such hardship.

5. As an African-American woman, Rushin is the absolute opposite of the dominant white male. Therefore, any and all expressions will suggest survival, not being oppressed by the dominant way of thinking, as well as personal views on gaining empowerment. The poem speaks to the strength of the African-American female character through hardship and her use of humor to take the edge off the bitterness of a hard life.

6. The title of her poem suggests that the question has been asked of her before. It is probable that those who ask the question have little idea of the true economic, social, political, and physical challenges to African-American women in urban cities. Her poem is a humorous, though realistic, response to such a question.
Mr. Language Person Takes a Hammer to Grammar
Dave Barry

1. According to a brief biography, William Safire, winner of the 1978 Pulitzer Prize for distinguished commentary, joined The New York Times in 1973 as a political columnist. He also writes a Sunday column, On Language, which has appeared in The New York Times Magazine since 1979. This column on grammar, usage, and etymology has led to the publication of 10 books and made him the most widely read writer on the English language. For these reasons, Barry refers to Safire in his opening sentence to set up his credentials as a “language expert” since he claims to have “kneed Safire right in the gerunds.” This allusion sets the tone for the rest of the article because of the humor it exudes about things grammatical; it also helps to define the audience because those who know what a gerund is will find the statement funny. It also assumes a certain literacy level of his audience, since they would need to know who William Safire was in order to appreciate the joke.

2. Boskin may categorize Barry’s humor as “outsider” because of the fact that it deals with the minutia of grammar, which is a seemingly marginalized subject matter.

3. Barry’s tone is sarcastic and ironic in that he is a writer who knows the rules of grammar. He assumes that his audience will understand all or most of the references and stereotypes he makes as well as find them humorous. Whether or not his article is funny to generations other than baby-boomers is open to discussion.

4. Building off of responses to question 3, students can discuss whether or not they share the same common sense of pop culture and social memory.

5. The Question/Answer technique makes the article appear and sound more journalistic than a comedy routine, although the pacing and style of joke after joke makes its structure seem deliberately comedic. The
strategy of repeating names and phrases as answers to the hypothetical questions he asks also contribute to the success of his humor.

CASE STUDY: COMICS AND POLITICAL CARTOONS

What Is a Cartoon?
Mort Gerberg

1. As paragraph 18 states, a cartoon communicates and conveys meaning through the cartoonist’s ability to attract the reader’s interest with the familiar then fooling the reader by changing it just enough to make it surprising—and therefore, funny. Time and correct visual freeze frames of a cliché are of utmost importance. The language of a cartoon is the same of art and drama: cast, dialogue, gesture, setting, and composition. It is a unique language in that it is physical, yet on paper.

2. Review each definition Gerberg provides to help students see the common thread of cartoons expressing funny moments of everyday life. Familiarity with the event on display is necessary, but the reason it is funny differs among the “experts.” Some find cartoons as a means of laughter while others see them as therapy, a chance to reveal feelings or make a point about an issue.

3. Paragraph 19 details the importance of manipulating a well-known cliché: identifying it, then putting a new twist on it. A cliché as a base of a cartoon is important because without it there would be no audience connection—no universal starting point. It is the twist that presents the unexpected, and thus the humor in the piece.

4. Student answers will vary.
Defiantly Incorrect: The Humor of John Callahan
Timothy Egan

1. This question is open to student opinion, but the idea returns to the outsider/insider theory of Boskin. If an “oppressed” or disabled person is the one making the jokes, then he is an insider and has made it all right for outsiders to laugh at them too.

2. “Bizarre” indicates that this humor is not mainstream; the clichés Callahan has turned upside down are not ones to which many people can relate. Moreover, Callahan deviates from highlighting the cliché to profiling social realities, many of which are deemed unfunny by the status quo.

3. Open to discussion, but as Callahan himself says, all sorts of jokes about painful subjects are out there as a way to cope with the pain. Perhaps physical shortcomings are seen as more “serious” and taboo than racial or religious epithets. Either way such double standards for humor are difficult to understand.

4. Student answers will vary.

EXPLORING THE LANGUAGE OF VISUALS: "Wheelchair Posse"
John Callahan

1. The “politically incorrect” aspect of this cartoon is that it is mocking a paraplegic’s inability to “get far on foot.” Student’s impulses to laugh or protest can be shared, but note differences in reactions once students recognize that the cartoonist himself is a quadriplegic.

2. Callahan’s cartoon topics range from anorexia, blindness, dysfunctional families, and the death penalty. However, in the preceding article we learn that “he was abandoned at birth by his mother and raised by Roman Catholic nuns of the old style school of guilt and harsh discipline, became an alcoholic by age 12 and was paralyzed in a car accident shortly after his 21st birthday.” For these
reasons, students may understand Callahan’s perspective and humor and not even begin to consider it offensive. Furthermore, once students read that the cartoonist admits to having a “sick humor” but wants to use it purposefully to confront societal issues, they are likely to be more open to accepting this cartoon as one to laugh at and not to protest.

3. The politically incorrect aspect of this cartoon is that one should not make light of another person’s disadvantages. This cartoon could make people feel uncomfortable because it makes fun of a disability; furthermore, the image of an abandoned wheelchair intensifies the quadriplegic’s helplessness. Callahan wants to confront this discomfort. Instead, people overcompensate when they meet someone in a wheelchair, usually acting overfriendly or patronizing or directing questions to a friend of the handicapped person. He rejects politically correct terms (“don’t call me something I am not”), and feels glossing over the challenges the handicapped face denies reality.

**Editorial Cartoonists—An Endangered Species?**
Doug Marlette

1. According to Marlette, a political cartoon should be a voice that responds to the madness of those bad times of the Republic. “Political cartoons are custom-made for such times of tumult when everyone was wearing their hearts and brains on their sleeves, and a good cartoon was as bracing as a whiff of tear gas” (paragraph 7).

2. Open to discussion, but as with Callahan’s brand of bizarre humor, political cartoons require a level of intelligence and wit that may not represent the mainstream.

3. Marlette feels editorial cartoonists are an “endangered species” because many cartoonists feel the need to employ a certain kind of “mandatory sensitivity” or political correctness. Therefore, “cartoonists whose ambition outweighs their talent or conscience are delighted” to abandon the genre of political satire.
4. Political cartoonists are disappearing because there is fear of working from instinct and unpredictability. They also face challenges with appropriate material as the general public becomes increasingly ignorant of politics in the national and international arena. Finally, an increasingly sensitive audience, one that looks for offense in almost everything, hinders comedic expression. Unfortunately, some editorial cartoonists have begun to turn on each other, “Instead of breaking new ground, creative energies are spent in rival bashing and crass self-promotion, achieving new levels of smarminess.”

When Cartoonists Were at Their Wit’s End
James Ricci

1. Cartoonist Steve Breen is described as having to overcome his “disinclination to function,” while Mike Luckovich became overly critical of his own work because he felt it didn’t capture every emotion he was feeling. The opening paragraph states the dilemma best: the country’s editorial cartoonists had to figure out “how to express an overwhelming sickness of soul before which their usual cutlery seemed without point.”

2. The main advantage older political cartoonists have is experience with having had to react to national events of such magnitude, such as Vietnam and Watergate. September 11 was an event of life and death that fundamentally changed the country, so younger cartoonists were particularly challenged with how to react.

3. Imagery includes all kinds of sense perception (not just visual pictures); therefore, iconic imagery is the use of recognizable icons as visuals to stir the senses. The significance of the iconic imagery used in cartoons after September 11 is that New York landmarks, such at the Statue of Liberty, Empire State Building, skyline, and other “I Love NY” symbols, were used to describe the feelings of the entire nation.
4. Cartoons changed over time because they followed the same range of emotions the nation was feeling. Students will observe that cartoons archived on this website display sadness, anger, patriotism, ridicule and satire.

5. As paragraph 12 defines, editorial cartooning is “weak when it tries to reassure or uplift [but] powerful and original when it ridicules and provokes.” For this reason, cartooning is an art form that meets its match when faced with reality. It can become thought of as a “negative” art since “cartoons” are generally thought of as comical when the case with editorial cartoons is that they are more witty and complex in nature.

EXPLORING THE LANGUAGE OF VISUALS:
Editorial Cartoons from September 11 and its Aftermath

Weeping Lady Liberty
Mike Luckovich
Atlanta Journal Constitution

1. The cultural assumptions this cartoon makes are that the world, especially New Yorkers, are upset about the events of September 11. The viewer needs to know the Statue of Liberty’s proximity to the Twin Towers since her eyes did witness the second plane going in; furthermore, a viewer should recognize Lady Liberty’s historical significance as a symbol of America’s welcoming immigrants (outsiders) to this land.

2. Student answers will vary.

3. Open to discussion. Words do not seem necessary when there is an American national monument crying with the image of the Twin Towers in her glassy eyes—it is obvious what the source of Lady Liberty’s horror is.
4. Most cartoons marking this event feature Lady Liberty with her hands over her face crumpled with sorrow over the tragedy happening in front of her. Some picture her with tears running down her face; some have her looking at the World Trade Center and some have her turned away from it. Luckovich’s stands out because it depicts the actual moment of planes going into the towers. Her face shows horror, rather than simply sorrow.

**Uncle Sam**  
Jeff Danziger  
*Tribune Media Services*

Uncle Sam’s sleeves rolled up, as well as his striped jacket off and suspenders showing, all give the effect that he is working hard to help clean the damage at Ground Zero. This is a strong image because he seems to be looking around at the debris and wondering how he can take care of all of it.

2. Other icons in the drawing are the Empire State Building and other skyscrapers that, with the World Trade Center, made for an instantly recognizable skyline. They are left standing to symbolize New York will still stand strong even after this devastating event.

3. The woman in Uncle Sam’s arms represents one of the many people who worked in the Towers who tried frantically to escape and was not successful. If Uncle Same were carrying a man, the image would still be effective as that man could represent the many New York police and fire fighters who were trying to rescue those trapped and in the process were killed by the tower’s collapse.

4. Open to discussion but students will likely notice the use of iconic imagery at a time of national loss. Nearly all of the symbols used for these cartoons depict U.S. patriotism and/or an “I Love New York” mentality. Students can also discuss the effects of Uncle Sam and Lady Liberty and whether one was more effective than the other.
Cell Phone
Jeff Stahler
The Cincinnati Post

1. Last words are being exchanged in this cartoon. The speaker is likely to be a family member, spouse, or friend of someone who worked in the Twin Towers. Readers need to know that many victims called their loved ones while trapped and trying to escape and even while on the hijacked planes.

2. Student answers will vary. Stahler “says” through this artwork that there are survivors of the victims who were never heard and those who will never forget their last conversations on that day.

We are all New Yorkers
Jeff Parker
Florida Today

1. The cartoonist uses the cliché of overly patriotic Americans in Florida who have purchased all of the typical “I Love New York” souvenirs to show their loyalty. The cartoon even uses the textual cliché, “In light of recent events” which was the commonplace reactionary phrase used on the news the days and months after September 11. The specific symbols present are the American flag, a Statue of Liberty headdress, and various New York T-shirts. The background necessary to understand the cartoon is the “America United” feeling that swept the nation after 9/11. For example, there was “flag fever” all across the U.S. and it became difficult to even find flags (of any size) to buy.

2. Open to discussion. On one hand, yes, the cartoon would be as effective without the caption at the bottom because the shirts and flags offer the same message. It is obvious by the shorts and palm trees in the background that the setting is Florida and that these non-New Yorkers feel that this is their way of offering support. On the other hand, the caption does help because it emphasizes that by wearing
such tourisy garb “We are all New Yorkers,” (even though native New Yorkers do not wear such shirts).

Muslims from Iowa
Corky Trinidad
_Honolulu Star_

1. An act of verbal abuse is happening in this cartoon. Someone is bullying another to try and make the point that he is more of an American than she is, just because she is of Muslim decent. The “evidence” of text is offered in the cartoon to support this image because it illustrates the stereotypical mispronunciation and misunderstanding of those “unlike” white male Americans.

2. The cartoon pictures a looming, "red-necked" man against a small school-age (she carries books) girl. The clothes on the “bully” and flag in his hand, as well as his size, symbolize his overzealous patriotism while the (shorter, younger) girl is simply in native dress. Her headdress basically makes her an “outsider” even though she reinforces the point that she’s from Iowa and just as much an American as he is.

3. Open to discussion. Students may point out that racism and hate crimes have occurred throughout the entire history of America, so it is likely that there will always be culture clashes and that, as Henry James once said, “It’s a complex fate, being an American.”
Chapter 6
The Language of Mass Media and Advertising

AS SEEN ON TV

TV News: All the World in Pictures
Neil Postman and Steve Powers

1. Still pictures, like language, can only convey part of the information embedded in a concept. Concrete nouns in language can only convey an abstract generalization of an object (“man” or “sea”); pictures can only convey a single instance of an object (a specific man or a particular location in or on the sea). Abstract nouns need specific examples; they cannot be conveyed in pictures except through symbols, which have their own specificity.

2. Juxtapositions with other images, symbols, sound, etc., supply context and, thus, give clearer meaning to moving images. For example, in paragraph 5, the smoke, coughing people, ambulance, and tombstone are arranged in a narrative sequence that suggests that a fire caused illness or injury, leading to hospitalization, and even death, for at least one person. In paragraph 6, the jets and explosions indicate a battle; surrendering soldiers indicate an end to the battle; and the American flags indicate who won. In paragraph 7, a newspaper headline establishes the date a hostage’s photograph is taken, and the voice-over accommodating a picture of an aircraft carrier tells us whose it is, where it is going, and what its mission is.

3. Violence and destruction involve change, and change is intrinsically interesting to human beings. If producers want to keep their audiences, they will play up stories for which they can supply
dramatic, dynamic footage. Furthermore, TV’s small screen minimizes the extent of the change, so the bigger the boom, the better (as far as producers are concerned).

4. Nonessential visual or auditory cues announce that something important is about to occur. Students should be able to identify familiar theme music. The sound of teletype machines and images of scurrying news workers suggest that newscast headquarters is a central and, thus, authoritative locale on the information highway. Data is constantly pouring in, being processed, then presented by anchors who sit atop a vast pyramid of reporters, machine operators, clerks, and others.

5. Events in world news are by nature disorderly. For instance, does an earthquake-as-news end after the main tremor? After the aftershocks? When the area is declared a disaster zone? Stories are often unlinked. Hence, newscasters need to jump from one story to another. They may insert transitional phrases such as “and in the news back home,” or even announce that an upcoming story is “a more significant event for American taxpayers.” Furthermore, producers may safely allow viewer interest to lag by sandwiching a story with little dramatic footage between two with dramatic footage. Postman and Powers imply that the sequencing of news items is decided for reasons other than content.

6. TV news focuses on surface events because of space and formatting constraints. According to Postman and Powers, the amount of language in an hour-long newscast could probably be printed on one newsprint page. But viewers can’t flip from one story to a more interesting one or skim headlines on TV the way they can with print media. If a story lacks compelling visual footage or is technical in some way, producers may omit it entirely since they are motivated by the most common denominator in what is newsworthy. “Commercial television,” as the authors remind us, depends on revenues from advertisements, and advertisers are motivated by audience share.
7. In paragraph 1, they compare TV news to docu-dramas, which make extensive use of re-created enactments. They then question how much viewers really understand the effect of pictures on audiences, implying that most of us don’t think about it and are thus susceptible to distorted information. Students should find the authors distrustful, even fearful, of the power of TV news.

8. The analogy of television to theater is an ominous one. Besides that fact that both are spectacles, theater is almost always fiction. It is a money-making enterprise in which stories are told, often with a moral or a message. Actors play roles, the narrative is made up, or if based on a true story, done with creative liberty. If TV news resembles theater, then its credibility as responsible journalism is undermined.

9. Postman and Powers offer two examples of events that may be overwhelmed or not produced at all: a new United States budget and arms control. The first is swamped by the more vivid footage of South American bleachers collapsing; the second may be cut because it requires a highly technical vocabulary with background information. Both have more far-reaching impact on the average viewer’s life, yet they are downplayed. Such downplaying of political news illustrates how TV fails to present material that helps citizens participate in their government through voting, letter writing, etc. Sports and weather, on the other hand, are not subject to the workings of a democracy.

**Oh the Profanity!**

Paul Farhi

1. Open to discussion, should be supported with examples and consider whether or not the television language is reflecting “real world” language.

2. Student opinions will vary.

3. Farhi describes the increase in coarse language on television as a result of “Sopranos” envy. Since the HBO show about “foul mouthed
gangster” is critically acclaimed, many writers want to imitate that style.

4. The statistics he offers as evidence prove that there is an increase to vulgarity on television, but then he offers counter-evidence of no real complaints about these “down and dirty” programs. Therefore, his article is neutral, which leads to his overall conclusion that the idea of what is acceptable is constantly changing.

5. As a staff writer for The Washington Post, he cannot risk offending his audience. He even admits in paragraph 9 with the Letterman “bull[blank]” example that “the word still isn’t printable in this newspaper.” Printed media is then more conservative when it comes to obscene language, but both can be said to go by the Fox Network rule: “Don’t surprise or jar viewers [or readers] with something they didn’t expect to hear.”

6. Student responses will vary.

7. Censors draw the line when it comes to racist or sexist insults. Whether or not there are degrees of offensive language is open to discussion. Students can refer to the ESPN example in paragraphs 24-26 to note what the result is when given a choice between less and more offensive language, but most will likely agree with Farhi’s opinion that if the language is not gratuitously included but is for “accuracy and authenticity” then it should be permissible.

Is Bad Language Unacceptable on TV?
BBC’s Online “Talking Point” forum

1. Student answers will vary.

2. Reflecting on Farhi’s facts in the previous essay, it seems that “trash talk” need not be taboo; however, students can bring up the parental and religious responses posted on the BBC online forum to counter this “reality.”
3. Student answers will vary.

4. The definition of “prude” is “One who is excessively concerned with being or appearing to be proper, modest, or righteous.” Since being called a prude is rarely considered a compliment, forum participants qualified their responses so not to seem overly conservative in the language debate. While students may straddle the line when deciding whether or not it is “prudish” to object to foul language, they should note the participants who were most concerned with especially minimizing its exposure to children.

5. Student answers will vary and should be shared in classroom discussion.

**Taking a War of Words Too Literally**
Deborah Tannen

1. Open to discussion. Students will note that instead of exploring the many facets of an issue, Tannen simply points out that the media prefers to make everything a battle. Controversy sells and conflict is interesting. The problem is that by assuming a polar position and defending it to the death, we close our ears to other points of view. It becomes a situation where everyone is talking and no one is listening. Newspapers employ provoking and often adversarial headlines designed to stir up reader interest. Reporters endeavor to reveal all the hidden dirt on a public figure rarely highlighting positive things the individual may have done. News media isn’t the only culprit here.

Most television talk shows feature adversarial confrontations like the one featured in Tannen’s article. Shows like the Jerry Springer Show almost skip discussion entirely in favor of getting down to the physical blows. It would seem there is no room for middle ground as long as there is a market for fighting. Class discussion may include a discussion regarding the political battles currently taking place in Congress, or Enron and its possible connections to the White House.
2. Building off of the responses to question one, students can restate Tannen’s purpose as offering examples to question the tactic of automatically reacting to issues, problems or people in an adversarial way.

3. Student answers will vary.

4. The impact of an “argument culture” is the belief that “conflict is high-minded and good, a required and superior form of discourse” (paragraph 16).

5. Open to discussion. Students can offer examples of when debate was encouraged in their classrooms. While higher education’s objective is usually to encourage discussion, argument is often the end result. The problem is that once arguments get really going, it is difficult to return the class to a more objective and thoughtful level. In some cases, students may become so angered at each other that shouting matches result. Tannen points out that this method of inquiry prevents productive discussion and eliminates the possibility for consensus.

6. The problem with “argument culture” is that the “winner-take-all” approach to arguments may prevent meaningful dialog. The inflexibility of this approach rarely solves the problem. In a situation where somebody “wins” and somebody “loses,” there is bound to be resentment and a lack of information presented. In your effort to get your point across, you may forget the central issues and alternative viewpoints. Moreover, when one side feels that they have lost, they often recoil and opt out so their opinion never gets voiced. Tannen feels this is a serious problem because animosity can spread “like a fever,” which will “erode our sense of human connection to those in public life—and to the strangers who cross our paths and people in our private lives.”
The Entertained Culture
Tom Shactman

1. His informative and credible tone is established with his opening example. Those paragraphs describe a persona, obviously skilled with the language, who can come up with “innovative and quirky ideas” but who instead is instructed to aim lower so to appeal to the (lesser intelligent) mass audience.

2. “Aiming lower” means to restrict vocabulary as well as sentence structure, word usage, and cultural referents. The implications are less accurate representations of reality.

3. Students can overview the examples offered to decide how effectively they support his point that an audience prefers visual to verbal. For instance, paragraph 10 describes the 1930s/1940s as an era where dialogue is most important, but a so-called literary character in 1980s “Murder She Wrote” as witless.

4. As paragraph 5 describes, “The nature of the misrepresentations are not accidental. Television program creators are advised to aim lower and this creates a self-perpetuating cycle of infinite regression, a cycle in which the most effective product is always the one aimed lower than the previous one.” Otherwise stated, was passes for articulate speech declines further.

5. Shactman indirectly advocates change in order to prevent “the downward regressive cycle” language has taken on television. His audience is not likely to be the mass audience he writes about since they would not want the same changes to occur or the standards to rise. See paragraphs 6 and 7 for textual references that reveal his assumptions about his audience.

6. Paragraph 9 best explains the connection between marketing and television language. Influences upon programming have been the idea that you have to give the star everything and the casting of only
beautiful women and handsome men in the leading roles, both of which imply that audiences will not look or listen to anything less than a pretty face. As a result, what these audiences embrace is visual storytelling; however, this strategy “is incapable of telling complex or subtle stories,” and results in “deliberately illogical, disorienting and surreal” products. Students’ opinions on this issue will vary but they should offer specific examples in support of them.

7. The writing techniques in this essay are the use of questions to the reader, use of “we,” “us,” and “you.” Paragraph 13 offers the most effective example of these techniques as it persuades the reader to acknowledge that we are all victims of this problem and this “smothering of invention”: “Let us cheerfully admit that the writing in sitcoms is frequently funny—I myself cannot watch a good sitcom without being often moved to laughter, and neither can you.”

THE LANGUAGE OF ADVERTISING

With These Words I Can Sell You Anything
William Lutz

1. Like the eggs sucked dry by weasels, weasel words are hollow. They appear to contain lexical meaning and value, yet on closer inspection they say “just the opposite, or nothing at all.” Advertisers use weasel words to create the illusion of making a claim for a product when, in fact, little or nothing truthful is being communicated.

2. A product is considered new for a period of six months during a national advertising campaign, and for as long as two years if a product is being advertised in a limited test market. A product is also considered new if it has undergone “a material function change.” This does not have to be an actual improvement in the product; a simple alteration will qualify. Thus, it is easy to sidestep the regulatory intention and create a “new” product by adding a lemon scent, for instance. Product performance does not have to be improved. These
regulations seem to assist efforts of advertisers to mislead the consumer.

3. Students might admit to a certain mental laziness that joins them in complicity with advertisers, thereby succumbing to the illusion that they are buying the “best,” the “most effective,” the most “helpful” products. After all, putting faith in an ad is easier than reading the labels of aspirin products or Consumer Reports.

4. Open for discussion.

5. The entire article instructs consumers in ways to avoid being duped by weasel words. In his concluding remarks, Lutz summarizes his advice (paragraph 50), reminding readers that their only defense against advertising is “to develop and use a strong critical reading, listening, and looking ability.”

6. Used with skill, the second-person you is considered acceptable, although many students will be familiar with the taboo. Here, the second person suits the tone, which is conversational, informal, and instructive.

7. Lutz’s style is engaging and chatty. Many comments are not only informative and instructive, but quite entertaining. See paragraphs 34 and 35, for example. Lutz ends the article with a humorous update of the 23rd Psalm to reflect the power of advertising. He also engages the reader directly in the process of analyzing weasel words. In fact, he gives readers instructions, if not commands, in order to get them involved. For instance: “Ask yourself what this claim is really saying. Remember, ‘help’ means only that the medicine will aid or assist” (paragraph 4). The combination of humorous imperatives to direct the readers’ attention make for an informal and colloquial, but effective, style.

8. The updated psalm is an odd and awkward way to end the chapter. First, the theme of the poem, “the power of advertising to meet our
needs and solve our problems,” is not directly relevant to the preceding discussion of weasel words. Why end with a poem about advertising in general when the essay deals with a very specific subject—weasel words? In straining to be funny and entertaining, Lutz made a poor choice for an ending. Second, it’s not very funny. If one is going to parody a poem generally recognized as beautiful, one would hope the result would be truly witty and irresistible. This parody is rather wooden, flat, and sophomoric.

The Language of Advertising
Charles A. O’Neill

1. O’Neill says that following World War II, the public had come to fear science, as well as to expect great things from it. Technology developed to create the atomic bomb had been employed after the war to produce “miracle” fabrics, better building materials, better automobiles, electronics, and medicines. Appealing to this heightened respect and expectation, the business world enlisted scientific experimentation and reasoning to determine the “fears, habits, and aspirations” of the buying public. Because cars in the 1950s could be made bigger and flashier than their predecessors, they were—and Americans were ready for them. Today marketing is a science, and science is still a yardstick of quality and reliability. Students can find numerous examples.

2. O’Neill says that writers “must glamorize the superficial differences” when product differences do not exist, or they must create differences by getting the audience involved in the action in the ad, not the product itself. For discussion, consider the recent Taster’s Choice instant coffee series of ads that present an entire courting sequence between two neighbors who meet as strangers on an elevator, then end up several commercials later flying off to Paris.

3. O’Neill cites six charges that have been made against advertising. He quotes critics who think that advertising debases English; that it downgrades or underestimates the intelligence of the public; that it
warps our vision of reality; that it sells us daydreams—distracting, purposeless visions of lifestyles beyond our reach; that it feeds on human weaknesses; and that it encourages unhealthy habits. In support of advertising, O’Neill argues that advertising language is only a reflection of the society around it, and that “slaying the messenger . . . would not alter the fact—if it is a fact—that America will be the death of English.” On the positive side, he says that advertising is an acceptable stimulus for the natural evolution of language. Further, he says that advertising does not force us to buy anything, but rather stimulates the development of new products in the marketplace, while conveying useful information.

4. According to O’Neill, ad language is distinct from other languages: It is edited and purposeful, rich and arresting, calculated to involve those exposed to the advertising message, and usually simple in structure. In addition, advertising language has its own special rules of grammar. For example, the Marlboro lines, “But, I also want taste. . . . And real pleasure” are not complete thoughts and therefore do not meet the requirements of a formal English sentence.

5. O’Neill refers to the use of red in the depiction of autumn and fire to symbolize warmth, experience, and wisdom. Other symbols could include the strong-armed man on the Mr. Clean detergent bottle, the giant of Jolly-Green fame, or BMWs. Are symbols effective? O’Neill believes they are, because with repeated exposure they acquire the power to call up in the consumer’s mind a host of ideas and images that could not be communicated as effectively in any other way.

6. Even if a famous person endorses a product, he or she is not an expert in that particular field, so it does not follow that the product is especially good or even any better than the competition. That NBA superstar Michael Jordan pushes McDonald’s doesn’t make for a better burger, since he is not an expert on processed meats. But we might think that if a Big Mac is good enough for Mr. Jordan, it’s good enough for us.
7. Lutz, educator and author of books on the use of words, presents a negative view of advertising. He claims most of advertising copy is composed of weasel words and other examples of doublespeak. He warns his reader “just about any language associated with a product will contain the doublespeak of advertising” in paragraph 38. The buyer must be aware “the ad is trying to get you to buy a product, so it will put the product in the best possible light, using any device, trick, or means legally allowed.” He cautions the reader to “figure out exactly what each word is doing in an ad. . . .” O’Neill, a professional advertiser, opens up his piece with discussion of the success of advertising language. He refutes critics and criticism throughout with the apology, “Like any form of communication, it can be used for positive social purposes, neutral commercial purposes, or for the most pernicious kind of paranoid propaganda.”

8. O’Neill hooks the reader’s interest immediately with bold, provocative statements, such as the opening claim and the first sentence in paragraph 2: “But World War II Science had also yielded The Bomb.” Later, as in paragraph 6, he opens paragraphs with simple but leading questions, as if anticipating the thoughts of the readers. Here and elsewhere, the author demonstrates his awareness of his college audience—people born a generation after the 1950s, and readers who might need big simple hooks.

**Language Abuse**
Herschell Gordon Lewis

1. One example that illustrates Lewis’ balance of humor and concern can be found in paragraph 5 and deals with credit cards. It is an effective example because it proves his point that “pre-approved” is not an accurate term. In paragraph 9 Lewis states his call for action to reclaim terms such as “important” and “free.”

2. The connection spoken of here is that overused and unjustified words are weakened to the point that consumers become apathetic to their meaning.
3. Herschell finds “important” to be the most abused word in marketing. Every time it is used and not in a justifiable context, it is weakened. He considers this word’s misuse a bigger problem than “free” or “new” because it can lead to the Fake Important Syndrome, a problem of epidemic proportions.

4. His advice to marketing writers is, “If you claim importance, prove it.” Student/consumer responses to the effectiveness of his advice will vary.

5. The fact that Herschell is an experienced marketing writing adds credibility to his argument, as does the humor with which he speaks. He’s written for credit card companies and financial institutions, so he has many valid examples to support his views.

6. Have students review his discussions of “free,” “important,” “new and improved,” “heavy duty,” and “world class” since these examples all remind the audience of his overall argument that such unimaginative marketing language has reduced their interpretation of these words, even in non-marketing contexts.

7. Because there are too many idiosyncrasies surrounding the word “free,” Herschell explains that its use backfires every now and then. As stated in paragraph 61, we’ve grown more cynical. Students may not be able to ascertain a concrete difference between the words, but “complimentary” or “at no charge” are described as legally safer alternatives.

**Selling America**
Sandra Silberstein

1. The Ad Council’s motivation was to provide messages of tolerance and patriotism in order “to unite a diverse country in common cause at a time of war.” Otherwise stated throughout the text, the campaign was to “sell America to itself” as a means of nation-building.
2. Silberstein’s opinion seems supportive but also critical in that she makes sure to examine all possible response to the campaign.

3. To gain initial exposure, web pages added Ad Council banners on a continuous loop and then a page was created to voice reactions to the “I am an American” campaign. These uses of the Internet help to promote the agency’s message because they serve as constant reminders as well as a venue to respond freely. Since the ad itself appeals to all types of Americans, the Internet is the best public domain with which to reach all of those ethnicities.

4. The television commercial received laudatory responses mostly, while others noted limitations with respect to diversity. Some felt (refer students to paragraph 25) certain groups were excluded, even when they weren’t, while others felt it was an example of American distancing itself from political correctness.

5. Student answers will vary.

6. The universalist reading of the campaign is for citizens to not “lose sight of the commonalities of being human.” Most importantly, according to paragraph 12, the forty individuals shown in the commercial “remind America of its multicultural identity at a time when that could be threatened.” The ad’s success is open to discussion.

**EXPLORING THE LANGUAGE OF VISUALS:**

*Americans Stand United* (AAI advertisement)

1. Open to discussion.

2. Since its message is to speak out against hate, the symbolism of the Twin Towers in their rightful place on the skyline is appropriate as those buildings came down as a result of hateful terrorist actions.
3. Because the events of September 11, 2001 happened during the day, showing the Twin Towers at night allows them to resemble the other skyscrapers with their lights on—the words of the ad represent their lights still on, still vibrant and always memorable.

4. Student answers will vary.

5. At the bottom of the ad are the logos for the Ad Council and the Arab American Institute in order to further show a united front. Hate crimes toward Americans of Muslim faith resulted soon after 9/11 but they were foolish acts of anger. The final lines attest to this and appeal to Americans to not let hate “take” them.

6. The language of the ad is simple and straightforward in its attempt to prevent further hate from happening between fellow Americans. The use of rhetorical questions to open such a line of thinking asks and persuades readers to understand the logic of preventing hate toward a false enemy.

**EXPLORING THE LANGUAGE OF VISUALS:**
*Two Sample ads for SUVs*

**Jeep Wrangler Ad**

1. The effect of the exclamation point is to show the go-anywhere and fun quality of the Jeep Wrangler.

2. The use of boulders to create the exclamation point promotes the Jeep Wrangler as a rugged 4X4 vehicle that can tackle the roughest terrain.

3. Most likely, yes, an audience would understand the Jeep shown in such a mountainous environment to be a reliable and popular SUV.
4. Open to discussion.

5. Extending the discussion from question 3, the copy complements the already obvious reliability of a Jeep Wrangler. It offers more specifics and credentials about the 4X4, but most of all it emphasizes the discovery and fun the Jeep offers its drivers.

6. Again, the exclamation point after the image of the Jeep implies that the SUV is in itself a statement. Exclamatory expressions such as this, as the copy also suggests, make the viewer overlook the “important features” of the SUV and focus on the way the world will look at you while driving it.

**Chevy Blazer Ad**

1. Both ads place the SUV in rugged areas and heighten their appearance. The main difference is that the Blazer ad has the vehicle on top of a lighthouse while the Jeep is on the same level as the boulders that form the exclamation point.

2. The effect of featuring the Blazer on top of a lighthouse with its lights on is to symbolize the car as a beacon of light that can guide its passengers safely home.

3. The written copy at the bottom of the ad focus solely on the SUV’s halogen headlamps, daytime running lamps and fog lamps. This text reinforces the message of security because light is always considered safer than darkness.

4. Effectiveness of the ad is open to discussion.

5. The target audience seems to be a general audience. Men will appreciate the power of the lamps, women will appreciate the safety the lamps provide and children will enjoy the image of a lighthouse.
with a car revolving on top of it since it is an out of the ordinary image.

6. Open to discussion—the symbolism seems to work well here because if the Blazer is “most dependable, longest lasting truck on the road,” then the light and security it provides is similar to a lighthouse who guides travelers throughout the night.
Chapter 7
Censorship and Free Speech

CENSORSHIP AND FREE SPEECH IN BOOKS

The Freedom to Read
The American Library Association

1. While there are no examples offered of specific books in question, it is a conference statement, so its audience is probably familiar with the books considered in need of warnings. Thus, the conference statement can be considered a lengthy motivational appeal against bans or warnings on books. Ask students to consider these two sides when judging the ALA’s lack of evidence.

2. Have students discuss the social crises America is currently experiencing. Do these issues affect everyone? The ALA seems to think that an already tense democracy will become an enraged one if kept from books and the right to read and discuss books, but opponents might be quick to point out that various groups living in our democracy might not consider themselves in a socially tense situation.

3. Student answers will vary.

4. Paragraph 15 addresses the issue of book labeling. In sum, the ALA is against others (publishers and editors) thinking for their readers and customers. Ask students if and how they differentiate a label from a warning. What do they think would constitute a questionable book?

5. Students can break into two groups, one to examine the use of the First Amendment and the other to examine the Constitution. Once
each group has established the “support” its document offers to the ALA’s claim, they can evaluate its persuasive effectiveness.

Book-Banning, Real and Imaginary
Jeff Jacoby

1. To ban something is to prohibit or forbid, while challenge is more of a call to confront or object, so yes, the ALA is exaggerating the issue of “Banned Books” since the books in question are not really banned or prohibited from the public. Jacoby even cites the ALA as acknowledging, “the complaints usually go nowhere and the books stay where they are.” Students can openly discuss the effectiveness of changing the name to “Challenged Books Week.”

2. Jacoby’s argument is that banning books is not a censorship issue since those same “objectionable” books can be bought over the web, listened to on tape, and read in a host of foreign languages. Students should review his evidence to evaluate whether or not all of his examples support this argument effectively.

3. Student answers will vary.

4. Objections to books that are to be used in the classroom seem unreasonable to Jacoby as he states, “Parents who want to keep “Huckleberry Finn” and “Native Son” out of students’ hands deserve to get short shrift.” No, his qualification of objections helps to persuade readers to support his argument since he notes that it is often parents who complain. He feels parents should use their common sense to determine which texts are appropriate for their children to read (outside of the classroom.)

5. Yes, there seems to be a form of censorship happening when librarians and bookstore owners allow their personal opinions, or “ideological prejudice” to limit the access of books to consumers.
There is no logic to assuming from a title that a publisher’s entire catalog is “ridiculous” or “facist.”

Is Harry Potter Evil?
Judy Blume

1. Blume engages her audience by opening with an anecdote about having a grandson who is a Harry Potter fan. She knows that he will be thrilled with getting the third book months earlier than his friends. The honesty in this narrative and the rest of the article is a technique readers can appreciate as well as her humor and credibility as an author.

2. A zealot is one absorbed in devotion to anything; an enthusiast; a fanatically committed person. Blume uses this term to describe those parents who object to “books like the Harry Potter series because they ‘claim they’re protecting children from evil.’” These books are presumed suspect since children enjoy them; however, there is no real danger to their content.

3. The perceived danger of the Harry Potter books is that of the fantasy world they depict. Some adults say these books teach “witchcraft, sorcery and Satanism.” Blume’s reaction is, “If it’s not one ‘ism,’ it’s another.” The fact that her books have been banned influence her reaction because she knows the disruption to creativity and backlash it can cause.

4. The tone of her hypothetical example is sarcastic, but convincing. Students will find it to be an effective ending because it proves her point that “objectionable” books are only defined by parental overreaction when the real focus should be on the fact that children are reading and enjoying it.
EXPLORING THE LANGUAGE OF VISUALS:
Huckleberry Finn Banned!

1. The cover reveals little about the many controversies associated with the book. In fact, the cover seems almost dull compared to the book’s actual content. Students can discuss how books are judged by their covers, and what they would think this one was about if they saw this cover featured on a bookshelf. To discuss more Huckleberry Finn covers, direct students to the Web site featured in the last question.

2. Student answers will vary, but encourage students to discuss their impressions of the book, and why it has caused so much controversy.

3. To facilitate discussion on this question, break up students into two groups, one supporting Hemingway’s statement and the other disagreeing with it. Ask students to support their answers with examples from other famous literary texts.

4. Student answers will vary, but direct students to explore how the covers represent a particular period of history and the social climate of the time. Do they notice anything on these covers that may cause controversy now? What do the reviews say about the social moralists of the time? Do the reviews differ from region to region? How have protests about the book’s content differed over the course of its publication? Ask students if they think the protest made about the book today would have any relevance to these early reviews.

Author’s Afterword from Fahrenheit 451
Ray Bradbury

1. Paragraphs 10, 16, and 24 all include what Bradbury infers would be “acceptable,” and these descriptions are all negative. For instance, an acceptable book would be “reduced to nursery rhymes” or, more pointedly, be a “non-book.”
2. Job is a character from the Bible who was an upright man tested by God. Students may find the comparison ironic since Bradbury is implying he is an upright man and author. Who is testing him?

3. Have students locate examples of his word choice that suggest one or all of these tones and then share how they as an audience received them. Bradbury’s message here is that he is a writer, an artist, who will continue to write his stories the way he wants to and not the way people suggest he write them. His tone suggests he has no patience for interference.

4. His life as an author has recently been bothered by censorship and minority reactions. The only way he can handle them is by himself, as a writer writing what he wants and writing against such acts.

CASE STUDY: CENSORSHIP AND FREE SPEECH ON CAMPUS

Regulating Racist Speech on Campus
Charles R. Lawrence III

1. Lawrence says in paragraph 1 that the protection of racist speech from government regulation “reinforces our society’s commitment to tolerance as a value, and that . . . we will be forced to combat it as a community.” University policies, he feels, do nothing more than impose sanctions against intentional face-to-face insults.

2. Lawrence says that by so framing the issue, the racial bigot ends up being morally elevated while “the rising flames of racism” are fanned. Also, by allowing unrestricted rights to those who practice hate language, we allow both psychic injury and racial victimization of minority people to continue.
3. “Racial insults are particularly undeserving of First Amendment protection because the perpetrator’s intention is not to discover truth or initiate dialogue but to injure the victim.” Students can voice their opinions of agreement or disagreement in an open discussion.

4. Student answers will vary.

5. Lawrence’s argument is clearly syllogistic: The First Amendment does not project utterances that “inflict injury or tend to incite an immediate breach of peace”; racist speech injures and incites violence; thus, the First Amendment does not protect racist speech. Direct students to paragraph 5 where Lawrence discusses “fighting words” as an exception to the First Amendment. Other than using the words of the amendment itself, students may find that his argument offers too few specific examples.

6. Open for class discussion and/or presentations.

7. Lawrence immediately establishes himself as someone who questions authority and who ardently defends individual rights, including his refusal to participate in a civil defense drill, a school and national activity. His strategy is to set himself up as seemingly inflexible on such issues to underscore the dangerous consequences of unrestricted racist speech to which, in the next paragraph, he concedes strong opposition.

The Betrayal of Liberty on America’s Campuses
Alan C. Kors

1. Kors believes racist and inflammatory speech should be protected by the First Amendment because of the repressive effect of speech codes. His examples in paragraphs 2 and 3 demonstrate that the results of speech code enforcement are often nonsensical. Students can offer examples of other circumstances in which racist speech should and should not be protected.
2. Student answers will vary.

3. Kors’ reaction is that school administrators who enforce speech codes may actually lead to the restriction of all opinion. As he explains in paragraph 10, he feels these codes sap the courage, authority, and conscience of young adults who should be relishing liberty. His idea of censorship as student manipulation is the “mandatory political enlightenment” that these codes advance.

4. First, ask students for their own definitions of political correctness and the ways they have seen the term applied. Then, ask students what the “progressive” view is.

5. This question is open for discussion but students can be broken up into groups to evaluate his tone, style, support, and organization.

There’s No Such Thing as Free Speech, And It’s a Good Thing, Too
Stanley Fish

1. As a rhetorical argument between the left and right, Fish establishes his thesis that the “label” of free speech is misconceived. He asserts that there isn’t such a thing as “free speech” because it is too abstract of a term; it is a concept filled with whatever content and direction one can manage to put into it.

2. The vocabulary of the argument in support of free speech is that it is an independent value. There are views of the term as a “political prize” and also as an “obstacle.” Fish feels the liberal left’s defense of free speech may be a disservice because if that “prize” has been captured by a politics opposed to yours, it can no longer be invoked in ways that support your purposes.

3. The example of R. v. Keegstra supports Fish’s argument since it proves the United States mishandles free speech—it is not an absolute that no one can manipulate. The Canadian qualification of “reasonable
limits” clarifies much of what is wrong with the U.S. interpretation. Students should discuss whether or not a balance can be achieved.

4. Fish states that the problem with separating speech and action is that speech always seems to cross the line into action, where it becomes consequential.

5. “Fighting words” are words “likely to provoke the average person to retaliation, and thereby cause a breach of the peace” (paragraph 8). Fish finds this definition complicated because some words can be provocative to one group and not another. The whole concept is based on quite a subjective perspective: “Every idea is an incitement to somebody and since ideas come packaged in sentences…every sentence is potentially…a fighting word and therefore a candidate for regulation.”

6. Discussed in paragraphs 12-14, higher education’s purpose is to allow for free expression to flourish, but universities also make sure to regulate that expression in order to fit their tenets. Those who do not recognize the latter half of this purpose need to rethink the role of free speech on campus. Fish feels free speech does not really connect to higher education’s true purpose because if its only purpose was to encourage free expression, then there would be no need for classes, exams, etc.

7. Student answers will vary.

8. Fish is distressed by the publication of this material since the printers and editors knew it was a lie and distortion but still allowed it to be printed. It should not be protected by the First Amendment because it wasn’t true. “You have an obligation to no ignore contrary evidence and not defer action in the name of an interpretive future that may never arrive. Students’ opinions will vary but will likely agree that this manipulation was “slick.” Reminding (less than savvy) publishers of “The First Amendment” can be seen as an appeal to
present information as an exercise in free speech, even if the information is offensive.

**Muzzling Free Speech**

Harvey A. Silverglate

1. “Free speech zones” are places on university campuses that relegate protests demonstrations, and all other forms of student speech. Silverglate feels that these zones serve no purpose and instead believes they present a threat to the university ideals of free thought and free inquiry.

2. College administrators have used the “tricks” of content-based speech codes, and racial and sexual harassment rules, which are de-facto speech codes. The author objects to limiting student speech because he feels they should not be silenced, anywhere. They should have the “freedom to choose where and when and to whom to speak.” Depending on student experience, evaluation of speech codes is open to discussion.

3. Open to discussion.

4. Student answers will vary but compare to the following example: Silverglate argues that university campuses should not be turned into censorship zones, especially since most of America (due to the Political Correctness movement) already is one. His examples of University of Houston, Penn State, University of Wisconsin and West Virginia University all prove that “free speech zones” do not serve a legitimate purpose.
Difficult Conversations
Dorothy Rabinowitz

and

Censor This?
Austin Bramwell

1. After sufficient review of the web research, open to discussion.

2. While it may depend on the type of law they practice, it seems that any curtailing of free speech alongside a less than argumentative education would harm these students. Lawyers should be empathetic towards their clients, but courtroom strategies (cross-examining, etc.) require a more rigorous style of speech.

3. Rabinowitz’s position is against the speech codes and harassment policies she describes. Her final paragraph describes the incidents as “hysterically inflated” and that the school’s current pedagogical motives are not at all in congruence of what the law is based on, i.e., argument, debate and the Socratic method. Since Fish believes no such thing as free speech exists, he would respond positively to her editorial because, and Silverglate and Kors would agree too, the BLSA and Harvard Law School administration have both threatened the university ideals of free thought and free inquiry with their nonsensical and repressive reactions.

4. Student answers will vary.

5. This quote is chosen because it proves the timidity with which the Harvard administration and students are speaking. No, this kind of thinking is not encouraging any time of uninhibited debate. The implication is that while Dean Rakoff may approve of debate, those classroom debates are carefully structured and monitored.

6. In a numbered list, Bramwell describes the effects of the incidents described in Rabinowitz’s essay. He feels that the incidents did not merit a speech code and the courses created “to augment racial
differences and exacerbate racial tensions” only separate the races further. He even shifts the blame onto affirmative action rather than the “systemic racism on campus” the BLSA claim.

7. His tone is matter-of-fact and students will likely agree that he faced a risk in sending this letter to the editor. He is direct and voices his strong opinions on rather touchy subjects, namely the decisions of the Diversity Committee and the feelings of the BLSA.

8. Student responses will vary.
Chapter 8
Political Correctness and Hate Speech

POLITICALLY CORRECT LANGUAGE

Hate Speech
Robin Tomach Lakoff

1. The “right” and “left” views are conservative and liberal, respectively. Students can refer the brief history given in Lakoff’s opening paragraph to note their basic stand on the First Amendment issue: “Conservatives have always tried to impose sanctions on free expression, while liberals have tried to keep the ‘marketplace of ideas’ open to all traders.”

2. Most often, her purpose for emphasizing certain words is to remind the reader who is granted more privilege and who is harmed by language. Examples of her argument that hate speech can lead to hate crimes can be found in paragraphs 19 with “must” and “have to” and in paragraph 22 with “deciding” and “willing.”

3. While she offers examples of both sides of the issue and ultimately gives a neutral conclusion, Lakoff stand on the position is clear early on in the essay. She states the “need for a remedy” in paragraph 3 and later in paragraph 14 mentions a “need to reach a formal understanding of language and its relation to action.”

4. She feels some racial epithets are worse than others because the white, upper-class and dominant groups “need not stoop so low;” therefore, “phallocrat” and “honkey” lack the sting of slurs against
women, blacks, Latinos and Asians. Her second paragraph quotes a source to support her claim and it states, “Racist speech proclaims racial inferiority and denies the personhood to target-group members.” This statement implies that if said by those of a superior class to an inferior, the remark hurts more because “all members of the target group are at once considered alike and inferior” no matter their contributions to society.

5. The “Snark Rule” is the idea that repetition makes a statement “true.” It relates to hate speech because hate speech works through the repetition of similar prior speech acts which can become especially harmful to members of “historically submerged” groups.

6. Students should review the examples given and discuss/debate about whether or not one should exercise or curtail the right to say anything.

7. Open to discussion. The presumption is that hate speech will incite hate crimes and violence so if women are targeted, one can assume that they will not strike out since they are less physically able.

8. Words are not the same as actions because the effects of a vile epithet may take longer to emerge and are harder to link directly to its cause, unlike the act of punching someone in the nose. Lakoff then clarifies Haiman’s argument to state that words are indirectly and/or psychologically world-changing.

9. Student answers will vary because Lakoff’s position is that it is up to you how you use language and whether or not you believe words are world-changing.

Bias-Free Language: Some Guidelines
Rosalie Maggio

1. Maggio introduces her article with concrete examples rather than with abstract generalizations. In her first example, she points out that generic use of masculine pronouns (the generic he) to refer to the
United States President makes it difficult to think about a woman holding that office. Her second example, in paragraphs 2 and 3, concerns racist language; when Caucasians have used derogatory labels to refer to other racial and ethnic groups, they have found it easier to inflict violent harm on those groups. When the term sexual harassment came into currency, legislators were able to formulate laws to help in eliminating that behavior. People who are described as detainees are experiencing a private inconvenience that is not the business of international politics. When those same people are hostages, their problem attains global significance. Fetal tissue is subject to far fewer moral and legal restraints on what may be done with it than is an unborn baby. In all cases, the specific language leads to fairly dramatic decisions and actions.

2. The first excuse Maggio lists, in paragraph 9, is lack of “fun”—enjoyment of spontaneous, playful use of language. She counters this objection by pointing out that careful speakers and writers edit their words for accuracy all the time; unbiased language does not detract any further than does routine attention to “proper grammar, spelling, and style.” The next excuse is that the language will be deprived of richness of expression (paragraph 10). Maggio contends that human imagination is more than adequate to offset any perceived losses. The third excuse is a reluctance to be overly self-conscious about avoiding offense (paragraph 11). Here Maggio becomes impatient, snapping that people who advance such an objection are insensitive and lazy. Just as we edit our spoken and written words for mechanical precision, we similarly adapt our choices to make the choices appropriate for a specific audience. The greatest objection, she says, is also the one that sounds most foolish (paragraph 12): that efforts at unbiased language will lead to absurd phrases. She dismisses this argument as unfounded nit-picking. Maggio adds one more reason for using unbiased language: It will improve writing style by removing clichés and generalized language, replacing them with precise, specific terms.
3. Maggio states, in paragraph 18, that “biased language communicates inaccurately.” Biased language is fundamentally about groups, or about individuals in the context of group membership; it is not about the individual separate from all components of his or her social identity. Biased language makes assumptions about individuals based on their membership in a group. Those assumptions may or may not hold true for the individual instance. A speaker who carelessly assumes that one individual conforms completely to conventionally accepted or normative behaviors, attitudes, and abilities associated with a group is guilty of stereotyping.

The statement about Mary’s hairstyle would not be an example of biased language. It may be erroneous to assume that Mary’s behavior is predictable as she may well shave her head before we see her again tomorrow morning. But, since the error in inference is not based on any connections between Mary and a social group, it is not biased.

4. The categories Maggio supplies are sex, race, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, disability status, and religious belief. However, she tends to lean heavily on illustrations from sexism alone. Students may not be able to come up with new categories—or, if they’ve just had a run-in with a landlord who “doesn’t rent to students,” they might. The difficulty is that our sense of who needs (or doesn’t need) protection from biased language changes over time.

5. In paragraph 23, Maggio uses the term to refer to language that “treats all people equally”; in paragraph 27, she says that symmetrical language “promotes fairness to both sexes.” Clearly, it’s a quality she means to encourage. Symmetry refers to equal or balanced treatment; it means using terms that convey equivalent amounts of information about different groups of people, when the difference between the groups isn’t important.

Maggio and other writers commonly use symmetry to discuss only gender bias, but it has important implications for other forms of biased language. Minorities complain, for example, of journalism that somehow never fails to point out that a criminal was African-
American, Hispanic, or Native American—but when the criminal is white, reference to race is omitted.

6. Gender-free language omits all reference to gender by using neutral terms. It is appropriate when gender is irrelevant to the subject under discussion. Gender-fair language uses symmetry: equivalent terms refer to men and women. Maggio extends the concept in paragraphs 28 and 29, when she warns readers not to draw generalizations about a group based only on its male participants, and not to interpret identical behavior with language that conveys different connotations based on gender stereotype. Gender-specific language seems to contradict the first principle—that we not mention gender if at all possible. However, this principle functions as a safeguard against faulty generalizations. If a vast majority of people who suffer from a particular kind of oppression are women (or men), then the language should reflect that preponderance so that we can observe it and correct it.

7. Student responses will vary. A brilliant politician who happens to be blind need not be referred to as “the blind politician” in most cases, following the principle of gender-free language. A name (perhaps followed by a title in the initial reference) would suffice. Following the gender-free principle, reportage of an ecumenical meeting should not refer to “nine members of the clergy and a rabbi,” drawing undue attention to the one Jewish participant. Solutions might include reference to “ten religious leaders,” placing all on equal footing, or could offer a more specific breakdown of the other nine individuals’ religious affiliations. Gender-specific language seeks to draw attention to where attention can help bring about a resolution of attitudes and problems. Hence a reference to “those who would be affected by a reduction in Social Security benefits” might well be followed by the parenthetical addition, “most of whom are over 65.” The solution isn’t as elegant or simple as changing “battered spouse” to “battered wife,” but it follows the same idea.
8. A generic word is a noun or pronoun that refers to a group of people (or, presumably, other entities) based on shared characteristics. A pseudogeneric term is one that purports to refer to a range of people, but that contains internal contradictions that restrict its meaning more narrowly. The contradiction can occur in a compound word such as mankind (in which women are excluded) or in a word that has acquired a conventional meaning, such as immigrants to refer to United States citizens (omitting Native Americans and African-Americans).

Pseudogeneric words cause harm by making it difficult to imagine members of the group who do not belong to the word’s more restrictive meaning. From Maggio’s example, the harm is especially evident when young, impressionable minds are impressed with erroneous limitations.

9. An exonym is a group label—a generic noun—imposed on a group of people by someone outside of that group. Maggio implies that exonyms are always to be avoided since the people so designated do not refer to themselves that way. Exonyms offend because they deny the individual’s or group’s right to decide on a satisfying form of self-reference.

Students might not recognize some of the words Maggio lists, or they might have problems coming up with appropriate substitutes. Recognition calls for knowledge of the history, etymology, and sensitivity of such words so as not to come up with a worse substitute. Part of the problem is that some groups may not have reached a consensus on what they want to be called. A new generation may spurn the usage of a former generation, resulting in a confusing sedimentation of terms. In order to know whether Negro, colored, black, Afro-American, or African-American is acceptable, for example, a speaker must know something about the context in which the word will be used. Negro would usually be inappropriate in conversation with younger Americans of African descent; but it would be mandatory in certain historical references (the 1920s as the era of the “New Negro”), and is still used as a neutral, preferred term by some older Americans of African descent. Furthermore, some terms
are being actively “reclaimed” by their constituent groups—that is, they are being used consciously and repeatedly as appropriate labels as a way to affirm identity and group solidarity. Of the terms Maggio lists, gay and pagan are undergoing this process now.

10. Maggio says simply that “naming is power,” but this may not be discursive enough for students. A name is important because it is the piece of language most intimately associated with identity. The name substitutes for the person or group; thus, if it has any near-homonyms in the language in which it is used, it can generate consequences. Someone with a name like “Suzy Bright,” for example, may be treated different in school than someone named “Bertha Gray.”

   By linking the woman’s name to a milestone birthday—a decade-marker well into adult maturity—Maggio is emphasizing that the decision calls attention to dignity and maturity. If students have trouble understanding the import, you might try going around the room and asking for the first association that pops into their heads with “Betty” (Betty Crocker? Betty and Veronica?), and a similar run-through for “Elizabeth” (Queen Elizabeth? Elizabeth Taylor?).

11. The student who claimed that the English language had “been around a lot longer than women” probably meant to say feminists rather than “women.” At a superficial level, the comment is funny. Taken literally, the student’s comment implies that speakers of English were, for a long time, exclusively men—women simply did not exist. The student’s comment also implies that all women are feminists, whose desired changes would be chaotically disruptive, and that language is and should remain static, unchanging, timeless, and hermetically sealed from human tampering.

   Maggio suggests that language insidiously shapes our perceptions about who has the authority to make decisions. Even if the student’s comment had not contained unintentional humor, it reveals a stubborn resistance to the notion that women have a right to change language.

   Students may decide that the student was a young man. But entertaining the possibility that the student was a young woman suggests more potently the power language has to shape experience. If
the student was a woman, then she has ironically negated her right to speak language.

The Word Police
Michiko Kakutani

1. The Whitmanesque litany of different kinds of people juxtaposes a broad range of people from different races, religions, ethnic origins, sexual orientations, and professions. It’s hard to imagine that any one classful of students would contain such a representation; yet, this is only a small sampling of the kinds of people who comprise the population of the United States. The range of people listed, according to Kakutani, sought to represent “a new politics of inclusion.” That is, Bill Clinton’s successful presidential campaign was based in part on constructing an image that promised to acknowledge the needs and claims of a full spectrum of the country’s citizens instead of a dominant, narrowly defined elite corps.

2. In the first half of the paragraph, Kakutani complains about the pseudogeneric he. She not only objects to avoiding the word man but to replacing words that either are male or invoke hierarchical organization. The “non-biased” term monarch of the jungle replaces “king of the jungle,” someone on top of the heap replaces “king of the hill” (with the substitution of “hill” seeming a bit gratuitous), and acme of perfection replaces “masterpiece.”

3. The messy dilemmas begin with the problems of contradictions to a specific rule. Maggio’s directive to use gender-specific language contradicts her directive to use gender-free language. A second dilemma is the contradictory edict issued by Francine Wattman Frank and Paula Treichler, that sometimes using inclusive pairs of pronouns, he and she, is appropriate, but that sometimes using the pseudogeneric he to emphasize wrongful exclusion of women is not appropriate (paragraph 13). The problem with both examples is that the decision about what terms to use is based on a value system that either is not
shared by all speakers or is inaccessible to those earnestly trying to make the right choice.

The final dilemma is one of fairness, a contradiction in principle rather than in rule. Speech codes restrict the use of a word by one group, while allowing its use by another group. However, if laws are supposed to be blind to bias-prone conditions such as race or sexual preference, then they cannot extend any privilege to a group based on those conditions.

4. Kakutani does not agree that the titles of well-known literary works (or any works at all, for that matter) should be changed or edited to conform to the bias-free guidelines Maggio recommends. Her examples, in paragraph 16, are chosen to sound silly and lack euphony; the substitutions disrupt carefully crafted rhythms and interplays of sound. Furthermore, as the substitute title “Animal Companion Graves” contrives to illustrate, changes can damage the connotative resonances of an original title so badly that the title becomes gibberish. Finally, if students were to employ brackets and ellipses, they would end up with cumbersome overpunctuated messes. This seems to be Kakutani’s point—although it might make a good object lesson in proper citation procedures, too.

5. Kakutani lists big boned and differently sized as replacements for “fat”; exceptional for “stupid”; chemically inconvenienced for “stoned”; the unhoused for “the homeless”; and the economically marginalized for “the poor.” She compares these newly coined politically correct terms to obfuscating lingo used during Watergate—pacification for “military aggression,” and inoperative statement for “lie”—in order to draw attention to the way both kinds of language try to deceive readers about the referential subject of this language.

She objects that these terms are deceptive, merely drawing our attention away from the real problems the original terms designated. As a result, the substitute terms are at best clumsy. Worse yet, they
may actually impair our abilities to solve the problems they name, because they help make the seriousness of the problems invisible.

6. Kakutani begins with a solemn moment: President Bill Clinton’s inauguration. She seems to laud the event, which for many signified an “official embrace of multiculturalism and a new politics of inclusion.” Her second paragraph shifts slightly in tone, but for those readers who would shop at the Politically Correct store, or who agree that animals should not be tortured in the name of cuisine, little seems out of joint here. Kakutani seems merely to be commenting on the belatedness of this official recognition.

   Only in paragraph 3 does her sarcasm become evident. She questioningly “corrects” designations for the Coppertone girl and for Superman in parentheses, and by the time she has applied the term clones to revisionist cartoon characters, her disapproval has become evident.

7. Kakutani avoids drawing an exact connection between the two. It seems like a sneaky maneuver, although it’s hard to tell just why she waffles here—unless she’s deliberately obscuring a weak point in her argument. All she says is that the two have occurred simultaneously. The reader is left with an impression of causality, but Kakutani can’t really be blamed for the false connection.

   Maggio would probably agree that there is a cause-and-effect relationship between the two, but she would reverse them. That is, Kakutani apparently wants us to believe that PC reform efforts cause sloppy language. Maggio would probably tag sloppy language as the cause, rather than the effect; for Maggio, sloppy language carrying outmoded biases has created a need for PC reform efforts as antidote and cure.

8. Kakutani’s lapses and immediate corrections are, or course, not the results of haste, but an effort to illustrate how time-consuming and nit-picking the effort of conforming to these guidelines can become. In the first instance, “man (sorry, individual) in the street,” she interrupts a cliché’d term to insert a new, genuinely generic word. This instance
demonstrates how “forgivable” biased language is, because it is so deeply embedded in well-worn phrases.

In the second, “Bluebeard, the rake (whoops!—the libertine),” she uses a conventionally masculine description, “rake,” which she replaces with the more neutral “libertine.” The irony in the second example is that Bluebeard’s story is to be avoided, because its portrayal is too stereotypically masculine.

**Beware the Advozealots: Mindless Good Intentions Injure the Handicapped**

Bernard Rimland

1. Rimland’s first paragraph establishes the aggressive stance he takes on this issue. He vigorously attacks the opposition, stating that they are irrational and given to fantasies. Rimland is never clear about who the opposition is. “People who should know better” implies he is talking about those who work or live with disabled people. His failure to be more specific about who is behind the “conspiracy” he describes may be seen as a serious weakness in his argument.

2. The two words Rimland is combining are advocate and zealot. Advozealot refers to people who passionately but blindly push for what they think is best for the handicapped. These people believe they are advocating for the best possible treatment for the disabled, but Rimland argues that they are instead simply pushing for their own selfish agenda. The word advocate has somewhat positive or else neutral connotations for most people. Zealot, however, has a negative connotation as it implies someone who is fanatical in his or her beliefs.

3. Rimland offers very little evidence to back up the many generalizations he makes. He claims that advozealots are responsible for moving people from institutions to the community, but gives no specific examples of where or when this occurred. He also claims advozealots have “set out to destroy the special education system created by decades of advocacy,” but offers no specific evidence for
this charge. Rimland makes an argument that appeals more to emotions (particularly anger) than to logic.

4. Students may have differing opinions on whether the term is misleading. The phrase “children with autism” seeks to soften the labeling found in the term “autistic child.” The latter term puts the emphasis on autistic rather than child. By saying “children with autism,” one may be implying that autism is a disease or condition that may be cured, as if it were a cold. Since autism is rarely if ever “cured,” this language is misleading. On the other hand, the phrase “children with autism” does make us think of the child first, and the disability second, and that could be seen as having a positive effect.

5. Many students may feel that “children with disabilities” does create a different image in the mind of the reader than “handicapped children” (one that again puts more emphasis on the child and less on the disability) and that the change is not “nonsense.”

6. The phrase “urban jungles” may strike some students as slightly hysterical, perhaps even racist as the word urban is often used as a code to refer to people of color. This is another example of the emotional rather than logical quality of Rimland’s argument. He paints a picture of the helpless handicapped being preyed upon by the “animals” in this “urban jungle,” yet offers no real specifics about where or to whom this is happening.

7. Rimland argues that advozealots’ language is an attempt to “paper over the distinction” between handicapped and non-handicapped. He feels the underlying motivation for this use of language is an attempt to pretend that handicapped people’s disabilities are not real, and that they can be wished away with the “correct” use of language. Rimland implies several times that the advozealots live in a “fantasy land” and are unable to see the reality of the limitations the disabled face.
CASE STUDY: WORDS THAT HURT

“Nigger”: The Meaning of a Word
Gloria Naylor

1. Naylor begins her article with the belief that spoken words have more power than written ones, because spoken words occur in the context of the other senses—“sight, sound, smell and touch,” rather than sight alone, the only sense stimulated by the printed word. This richness of senses can add to words’ meanings with subtle nuances impossible with one sense alone. Furthermore, the four senses Naylor lists are those by which we experience the presence of other human beings, rather than by sight alone.

Naylor’s comment about consensus is tied to her belief that words themselves are merely “nonsensical arrangements of sounds or letters.” Just as a word has less meaning if it lacks the context of most senses, so a word has less meaning (for Naylor, none at all) if it lacks agreement among a community of speakers about what it means. This point is easy enough to demonstrate if you speak a few words in a foreign language—even Old English or Middle English will do—to students and then demand to know that the words “mean.” Without consensus, they have no meaning or power.

2. Naylor responds to her shock first by telling the teacher. She is certainly assertive in this scene, if not just a touch the sanctimonious tattletale; surely she had some inkling that the boy who already felt bad about his test grade was going to feel even worse when the teacher heard what he had said.

Next, she takes the experience out of the public arena of the classroom, where it does not seem likely she can expect a satisfactory
answer. She asks her mother. Her request is not just a request for dry information, though; rather, she appears to be asking for comfort, validation that she has indeed experienced an insult, and strategies about what responses she might make in the future. Her request for information is accompanied by a highly charged emotional context.

3. The first meaning Naylor cites is “a man who had distinguished himself” by displaying praiseworthy personal characteristics. The example she gives is of an exhausting stint of overtime in order to purchase a family home (paragraph 8). The second meaning is a term of endearment as when used by a woman to refer to her husband or boyfriend. The third is also used by the adult women—as “the pure essence of manhood” (paragraph 9). Here the man has once again displayed praiseworthy characteristics. But rather than earning or gaining a personal reward, the man so designated has triumphed over racist attitudes: He has brought glory (and possibly new opportunity) to the entire race.

Only the final meaning is negative; it most closely accords with the meaning that Naylor’s classmate intended. The common principle is that people so named have “overstepped the bounds of decency” set by the community (paragraph 10). However, in Naylor’s in-group usage, the word nigger still claims the person so designated as a member of the group, whereas the boy intended to draw as sharp a distinction as possible between himself and the high-scoring Naylor. Also, when used by Naylor’s extended family, the word implies that the offenders know clearly what “the bounds of decency” are, although they are overstepping. The boy’s use implies that the offenders cannot help but overstep, because they are not intelligent or moral enough to understand the concept of decency.

4. The noun girl, with special vocal inflections, was used by Naylor’s family to indicate approval of a woman’s “extra ounce of wit, nerve, or daring.” However, neither the conditions of usage nor the exact meanings seem to be reciprocal. For instance, as Naylor’s example illustrates, girl was used as a form of direct address rather than as third-person reference in indirect discourse. (In black English, the
sentence “that g-i-r-l pulled in $6,000 of overtime” would sound odd.) The meanings of the word girl were also more clearly constrained by the age difference between the speaker and the person referred to. Note, however, that Naylor is not supplying a scientific linguistic analysis; her comparisons of meanings, contexts, and rules governing the use of nigger and girl are hardly complete.

Naylor never really supplies a reason for the gender distinction. Students might hypothesize, however, that the distinction has something to do with perceptions of gender roles and behaviors.

5. Naylor finds nothing wrong with family and friends using nigger, but she does not wish to extend that privilege to whites. She disagrees specifically that blacks’ use of the word is evidence of “an internalization of racism.” In fact, she believes that African-Americans’ use of the term is a highly positive act of defiance and pride, reflecting a healthy sense of self-worth. Because she is able to distinguish at least three strongly positive meanings for the word, she believes that it has been effectively transformed for and by in-group speakers.

On the other hand, she does not want to allow whites the same privilege, because nigger is a word that “whites used to signify worthlessness or degradation.” Even good intentions are not sufficient to overcome her objections to white use of the term, as it would remain offensive in “the mouths of even the most liberal of white society.”

6. Naylor has already pointed out that context is very important for understanding a word’s full meaning; hence, she takes some pains to describe the exact circumstances in which she first heard the word. A briefer description would not have supplied the context. Further, Naylor allows readers to draw their own conclusions about the boy’s intentions to insult, rather than handing us the abstraction “insult.” She wants to replicate, as deftly as possible, her own context.

The boy’s remark was prompted by jealousy over what appears to be a long-standing awareness that Naylor’s test scores had been consistently higher than his. Naylor exacerbated the boy’s lack of self-esteem—after all, she need not have checked his paper to find out his
grade. Even if she had noticed his grade, her comment had little function beyond snotty one-upmanship. He seemingly lashed out in the worst possible way he could think of.

7. Naylor says that any of the three would have puzzled her. All three begin with "n." All three can be venomous insults. Yet nigger has only two syllables and is spelled the way it sounds. The other two words have five syllables, and their orthography may cause students to stumble if pronouncing them aloud for the first time. Placing nigger in such a context suggests the complexity of the seemingly simple word. Furthermore, it is often used to designate an ontological state: Those who use it as an epithet have in mind the subject’s unchanging racial identity. The other two terms designate practice. While nymphomaniacs and necrophiliacs may have unhealthy behavioral compulsions, they can at least in theory abstain from acts that would cause them to be so labeled. Contrasted with the other two words, then, nigger seems to cut even deeper. All three imply moral turpitude, but like the Puritan notion of Original Sin, only nigger cannot be remedied by an individual’s actions.

Naylor’s specific intention is open for discussion. However, it’s worth noting that both nymphomaniac and necrophiliac designate obscene sexual practices. Perhaps her choice of comparison words is meant to convey a repulsion deeper than a sense of mere insult about the word when it is used by the wrong person in the wrong context.

8. At first, the details about Naylor’s family don’t seem very relevant. The transition between Naylor as school child and Naylor as family member seems abrupt and digressive. However, the wealth of detail accords with Naylor’s opening observation that context is all. In order to explain how such a highly charged word could have such positive meanings, Naylor must make real for her readers the loving, bustling, proud people who used the word all the time. She seems to include the detail that children were hustled out of the room when the grownups wanted to talk about sex to make a point about the word nigger: that it was not considered obscene. It was used freely around children as an ordinary, if rather pungent, bit of language.
The Etymology of the International Insult
Charles F. Berlitz

1. This is up to students to decide for themselves, although knowing the origin of such insults won’t have any effect on the consciousness of those who use them or on their impact on those they are used against.

2. Disraeli’s comment underscores both prejudice and hypocrisy in action. A Jew is considered a “gentleman” until he’s left the room, when he becomes a “kike.”

3. Originally they were not insults: Jude referred to the tribe of Judah; wop came from the first syllable of guappi, which in the Neapolitan dialect means “handsome,” “strong,” or “good-looking”; and Chung-Kuo-Ren, from which chink derives, means “middle country person.”

4. As Berlitz says, a common insult is to refer to different nationalities by their foods—thus frog for Frenchman, limey for Englishman, kraut for German. I can’t think of any others in English.

5. A universal ethnocentricity is operating here, and it underscores Berlitz’s point that prejudice begins with the primitive notion that anyone who is not “us” is dangerous and inferior. Probably at the moment the first humans conceived themselves, they conceived of aliens, those “not-us.” What ultimately underlies the international insult is distrust and disdain for people not of one’s own ethnic or racial or cultural identity.

6. We can no longer afford such attitudes because the same people who harbor primitive hatreds and suspicions also have the latest means
of destruction. And isn’t it about time, after a million years of evolution, that we finally grew out of these old habits?

7. The anecdote is a fine one. It introduces several of the issues Berlitz addresses in the article: prejudicial insults, the distrust that underlies such insults, and just how widespread the custom is—even in the most polite Victorian circles.

8. In a few places Berlitz does let his own attitude slip through. In paragraph 3, for instance, he refers to the slur sheeny as “vulgar and opprobrious.” The most obvious display of his attitude is in the last paragraph. Here he directly warns readers of the dangers of the international insult.

The “R” Word: How Do You Avoid Saying “Retarded”?
John Cook

1. Advocacy groups find the word “retarded” demeaning and want to change it to something less pejorative. The European alternative is disliked, though, because of the implications of the word “disability.” Either way, used in a clinical or insensitive manner, the goal is to avoid the epithets that result from the term “retarded.”

2. Some groups argue that changing the label will create problems for the government programs that serve the mentally retarded. In essence, these arguments are strong because no one wants someone’s benefits to be taken away; however, if “intellectually disabled” becomes the new diagnosis, then all government programs will surely have to change their policies and literature to accommodate it.

3. Open to discussion.

4. The most “cringe-inducing” gradation of usage of the word “retarded” is “retard.” This word seems the worst since it is most often the insensitive name-calling form. Labeling a person a “retard” is
not at all like abstractly describing the person’s developmental

disability.

5. Students can assume Rimland’s passionate voice and state a reaction
that would accuse the advozealots Cook describes overreacting to the
use of the word “retarded.” While Cook’s article does not describe the
advocacy groups as being that troubled over the name change,
Rimland would probably focus on the unrealistic solution a “PC” term
offers.

Queer
Lillian Faderman

1. Faderman says in the second paragraph that the word was hated for
two reasons: (1) it was an insult used by straights, and (2) it labeled
gays and lesbians as general aberrations—“weird, eccentric,
suspicious” when they wanted to “fit in” and be like straights in all
areas but sexual practice.

2. Faderman says that for conservatives the term is not politically
correct. But the term has hurt people enough to have many recognize it
only as a hurtful insult. As the author explains, when you are
denigrated for your distinctness, it is hard to warm up to the enemy’s
prime weapon. Queer, to older, conservative homosexual men and
women, still accuses them of being abnormal and inferior. The same is
true of some African-Americans who refuse to reclaim nigger.

3. Open for discussion. Faggot is the pejorative term heard most often
today. Militant lesbians and gays probably don’t much care if the term
enjoys the neutral status of gay in the straight community. As for
neutralization of the term, I doubt that it will ever enjoy total success.
Unlike the word gay, with its positive denotations, queer carries with it
pejorative associations. As Faderman points, the word actively denotes
oddity, weirdness, and perverseness even when not used in reference
to gays and lesbians. It’s hard to think of the word ever losing its sting.
4. Open for discussion. Queer Nation has attempted to give the word a kind of in-your-face respectability. However, queer for many has a more vicious bite than past use of black in spite of Faderman’s claim that it was “the worst thing that could be said about a person of color in America.” The difference is that black undeniably designates skin color and is a term that has been used objectively by blacks for generations and by whites, some of whom intended insult. On the other hand, the word queer has a less ambiguous history, for as Faderman points out, the term was always pejorative no matter who used it. The parallel is not exact, which might explain why it may be years before queer enjoys the neutral status of gay.

5. Faderman says that gay excludes blacks, women, and the poor. Open for discussion. I think there is some truth to the claim that the term excludes women since most lesbians prefer lesbian. As for blacks, I doubt the homosexual African-American feels excluded by the word gay. In a vague sense, the poor are excluded since we hear very little about poor gays in the media.

6. Open for discussion.

7. The brief scholarly discussion shows that the author has researched her subject matter and knows what she speaks about. Thus, it adds credibility to the piece, which due to its appearing in the popular press cannot be too heavily documented. Also, her reference to Eric Partridge is not an obscure one, nor is it threatening. He was a slang expert and the author of the classic Shakespeare’s Bawdy.

8. These personal memories tend to validate the more general observations. Also, they humanize the powerful effects of language so often discussed in abstraction.

9. Faderman’s writing is quite accessible. The fact that she is a scholar and English professor might come through in her sketch of the etymology of queer and the references to Gertrude Stein and Eric Partridge. While the practice is not restricted to the writing of
academics, Faderman almost always backs up an assertion with specific references (e.g., Fred Niven and Julia Penelope).

10. The concluding quotation is a fitting example of the militant stand (“rallying cry to battle”) of many lesbians and gays who refuse to be put down by straights or submit to assimilation. Shernock’s “in-your-face” declaration stands in contrast to the measured tone of the author who is from an older generation, who admits the difficulty of warming up to queer, and who seems less militant. Yet, to conclude with it is to grant it stature and end the piece with a punch.

**Crimes Against Humanity**
Ward Churchill

1. Most students will be able to identify some of these names with a Native American origin, or with a usage by non-native people to denigrate Indians. Others like Cadillac and even the butter image may come as a surprise.

2. The press reacted by having athletes pooh-pooh the idea on behalf of administrators, managers, and the upper-echelon of athletic organizations. To add insult to injury, the spokespeople were minorities other than Indians—suggesting both that all the intellectual and financial powers in sports are and should be white, containing no minority representation, and that all minorities are interchangeable. In addition, the press generally downplayed complaints. In paragraph 11, Churchill offers appropriate responses, although they are few and far between. Stanford University dropped the name Indians; the Portland, Oregon, local paper refuses to refer to the Redskins by that team’s derogatory name. The latter example was articulated as part of a broad principle, that there is no excuse for using racial epithets.

3. Churchill lists blacks, Hispanics, Asian-Americans, and Jews, as well as Catholics and gays. In paragraph 6, he sardonically suggests that the “Jungle Bunnies” have grotesquely large lips, insatiable cravings for chicken and watermelon, and bad table manners to boot.
The image of Asian-Americans in paragraph 7 draws on World War II cartoons designed to show Japan and Japanese people as America’s enemy. The tone is clearly satirical, designed to outrage by its very excesses. Students should see that any group can be stereotyped and mocked, including their own.

4. Julius Streicher was executed in 1946 for “crimes against humanity” because he published and edited a German newspaper engaged in what Americans would have called “yellow journalism” rife with anti-Semitism and Nazi propaganda. Justice Jackson’s phrase “permanent benchmark for justice” shows that his decision was intended to serve as international case law for similar human rights cases. If readers agree that popular caricatures of Native Americans could lead to attitudes that contribute to genocide, then they must agree that such caricatures are morally indefensible. Whether or not students agree with this reasoning, Churchill’s placement of the historical information here is rhetorically elegant and effective in other ways.

5. In paragraph 10, Churchill suggests one answer: that Indians are too few and too weak to defend themselves. Also, history shows something of a vicious cycle. Native peoples are exterminated by slipshod or malicious actions, including healthcare; they are presented in popular cultural artifacts as weak and “vanishing”; and this portrayal leads to further exploitation and genocide.

6. For student discussion. If students do not fully agree, you may be able to negotiate a compromise. Should such names be phased out? New products only avoid ethnocentric images?

7. The title comes from the Nazi war crime trials. Churchill makes analogies between Nazi propaganda and the “final solution” of exterminating Jews, disabled people, gypsies, homosexuals, and other “undesirables,” on the one hand, and contemporary American popular culture and the systematic destruction of native peoples and cultures
on the other hand. The title invokes the horror and disgust we should feel in response to both instances of genocide.

8. Churchill’s historical information is essential. Without it, his article would read as opinion, mere editorial. Verifiable facts show the effects of sloppy, stereotyped thinking and name-calling. Without such, readers could claim that he is being “too sensitive” or alarmist. The grim litany of facts also acts as counterpoise to the parodic humor of the first half of the article, showing that Churchill’s objections are substantial and well founded.

**Discrimination at Large**  
Jennifer A. Coleman

1. Coleman’s piece is based on her belief that our culture lampoons fat people. There is no remorse or apology on television, newspaper columnists, etc. Her comparison of the treatment of fat people to the treatment of other groups can be summarized in one statement, “The overweight are at fault for their condition; [therefore], no tolerance is due.” From her experience, fat people always feel the need to establish their worth by losing weight.

2. Paragraph 11 details how people learn prejudice against fat people from the media—“Saturday morning cartoons, prime-time TV, and movies.” Coleman says that the fact that fat people are fair game is unfair when children are taught early on to be sensitive to gay, black, disabled, elderly, and speech-impaired people (paragraph 12).

3. Paragraph 4 gives the range of words that she heard: the polite, “You’d be pretty if you lost weight” and the hostile, “Lose weight, you fat slob.” Insulting obese people seems more acceptable and funny because we learn it is OK from mainstream media—Saturday morning cartoons, prime-time television and movies. Coleman states that “The hate is nurtured and developed” (paragraph 11) which evolves into the idea that “The fat kid deserves to be mocked.”
4. Coleman finds the words “lazy,” “disgusting,” “pig” and “slug” most painful because at the time she was exercising and dieting to change her appearance. It wasn’t until she realized that society will always place the nonfat in the superior position, “regardless of their personal habits, health, personalities, cholesterol levels or the time they log on the couch” that she became less confused and less insulted.

5. Building off of the response to question 4, students will find Coleman’s tone sarcastic, but also angry. Her use of a collective “we” to speak out against the discriminatory “you” in paragraph 10 is effective as well as her conclusion. The last paragraph is a direct call for action with her identification of the problem in mainstream America who tacitly accepts “jackass” conduct and offensive remarks.

Where Heaven and Earth Touch: A National ‘Speak No Evil Day’
Joseph Telushkin

1. The author proposes a national “Speak No Evil Day” so “to eliminate all vicious and unfair talk for 24 hours and thus plant the seed of a more permanent shift in our consciousness.” Whether or not it would work is open for students to discuss, especially considering the “Golden Rule” stated in paragraph 7.

2. Open to discussion.

3. Student written responses will vary.
Chapter 9
Language and the USA

IS THERE SUCH A THING AS “STANDARD” ENGLISH?

Good English and Bad
Bill Bryson

1. Using Latin as their model, early grammarians and writers helped establish the criteria by which English would be judged for centuries to come. As Bryson points out, their efforts led to the creation of rules and terminology that had little in common with English. As a result, English is rife with idiosyncrasies. Bryson points to the split infinitive, an impossibility in Latin that was pressed into English.

2. Although Bryson is disparaging in his attitude toward prescriptive grammarians, he is not advocating the overthrow of rules of usage. A “descriptivist,” he asks that rules be more flexible to accommodate constant and inevitable changes such as the synonymous use of flout and flaunt or different from and different than.

3. Bryson says the difference, for the most part, is a matter of “prejudice and conditioning” (paragraph 18). While that may be true, he does concede that for the sake of clarity even “the most liberal descriptivist would accept that there must be some conventions of
usage” (paragraph 25). Clarity in communication is his standard—a matter of pragmatics rather than morality.

4. In a word, they opposed change. By using Latin, a language long dead, as the model for living English, grammarians hoped to save the language from change. They fixed standards and prescribed rules which, ironically, attempted to resist the very dynamics that nurtured English out of its Anglo-Saxon roots. By contrast, Thomas Jefferson doubted the efforts to arrest change. In fact, he declined an offer to be the first honorary president of the Academy of Languages and Belles Lettres. Bryson is a descriptivist who finds the efforts of pop grammarians, such as William Safire and John Simon, “to stanch . . . the perceived decline of the language” (paragraph 11) ludicrous. As he says at the end of the essay, “One of the undoubted virtues of English is that it is a fluid and democratic language in which meanings shift and change in response to the pressures of common usage rather than the dictates of committees.”

5. Most students will no doubt find Bryson’s style accessible and friendly. His anti-traditionalist, anti-prescriptist stand is also attractive. Thought not academic, his style is of a standard educated form, softened with an occasional colloquialism—for example, in paragraph 1: “Instead of using loads of different verb forms, we use just a few forms but employ them in loads of ways.” He uses examples that are both informative and amusing, underscoring his sense of humor throughout. All in all, Bill (not William) Bryson projects a friendly, easy-going individual who clearly enjoys sharing his subject matter.

6. There are several examples throughout the essay.

7. Except for an occasional colloquialism, his grammar and usage is standard English. Throughout the essay, Bryson projects a democratic philosophy toward language, one that is consistent with the tenets of linguistic descriptivism. Some students might suspect a contradiction—maybe even liberal hypocrisy—given the fact that his own usage strictly conforms to traditional rules. It is important to
recognize, however, that Bryson seems willing to accommodate time-tested changes, such as hopefully. It is also important to note that the issues at the center of the controversy constitute a tiny fraction of English grammar rules and vocabulary.

**Everyone Has An Accent But Me**

John Esling

1. We mean that our speech is devoid of any distinguishing characteristics that set it apart from the speech of those around us. The National Standard, often heard in the broadcasting industry, is often recognized as “accentless,” but it too has its roots in language varieties that already exist in distinct social groups and their institutions.

2. His title connects to his thesis that everyone has an accent but since its construct is relative, we may only realize it when we find ourselves among people with different backgrounds. We also feel we don’t have an accent because our speaking style changes depending on context in ways we often cannot hear.

3. Student answers will vary.

4. Open to discussion and should include regional, national and international stereotypes.

5. Open to discussion.

6. We distinguish accents based on the word order and common expressions of our language. Esling states in paragraph 7 that “a stranger’s exotic pronunciation of a word which we recognize and understand can be catalogued as foreign, and we may ascribe it to one familiar stereotype or another and predict what the speaker’s
pronunciations of other words will be like. In this way, we see others as having an accent because we take ourselves as the norm or reference to compare and measure others’ speech.”

**Label Babel**
Richard Liebmann-Smith

1. Students’ Internet searches will likely find public reaction to Bush’s mistake. The mistake is understandable considering the defense that there is no “Asia rule” but embarrassing too since he is the President and a world leader should know better. Liebmann-Smith defends the error by referring to the spelling (-or ending) not being a tip-off and by stating that there is not much reason to these quirky designations.

2. Student answers will vary; the exercise can be done in small groups so collaborative responses enhance the discussion.

**Why Good English Is Good for You**
John Simon

1. Good English improves communication, as well as memory and thinking.

2. As Simon says, it is a matter of clarity and concision. Why not learn to say things correctly? Why perpetuate grammatical errors, even minor ones? And why leave it to the listener to unscramble simple meanings?

3. Simon does not say that language pollution is second only to air pollution in seriousness; he says we should consider language pollution to be this serious. Simon is known for his high regard for correct English, which he has defended in several books and in columns for newspapers and magazines. To students, he may seem too severe in his condemnation of sloppy English. Yet he holds that bad thinking produces bad English, and implies the converse—that fuzzy, sloppy language encourages fuzzy, sloppy thinking. He may be right.
4. In paragraphs 9 and 10, he argues that memory is enhanced by good speech, since many conventions of correct usage are not logical and must be memorized.

5. Simon’s counter-argument begins in paragraph 17. He agrees that language changes naturally, and that neologisms and slang enrich it as it evolves. But he argues that there is no need for syntax and grammar to change also, or the pronunciations of words. Nor should expressions become less precise. He draws analogies to wars and diseases to argue that there is no need to perpetuate language problems or give up the effort to stamp them out just because they exist. He says that there are books of grammar, dictionaries, and education to arrest unnecessary change (paragraph 19). Language, he says, can have rigid standards of usage to prevent loss of such distinctions as who and whom, while not retarding the natural evolution of our lexicon.

6. According to the dictionary, nice means “agreeable, commendable, pleasant, respectable, suitable, friendly, and kind.” It also means “characterized by revealing or demanding discrimination, delicacy, or subtlety of distinction,” as well as “precise, accurate, or minute.” The fact that nice has so many meanings demonstrates how its precise and original meaning (the last definition) has been flattened out to airy nothing, or airy everything. Many other common words have become meaningless through overuse. Consider the following words that are so often used, but rarely in their original sense: awful, terrific, wonderful, fantastic. Awful, for example, originally meant “full of awe,” but today its informal sense is “exceedingly bad, unpleasant, or ugly.” Awful is also an empty intensifier, as is very—for example, “he’s an awful bore,” or adverbially, “he’s awfully tall,” or “awful nice.”

7. His main argument is that educators have been duped by the liberal structuralist theories of the 1960s—theories based on assumptions that language belongs to everyone. The consequence, says Simon, is the justification of idiomatic English, such as comes from racial and ethnic minorities or from regional dialect groups. He also argues that if
teaching conditions were improved and if parents taught children respect for language, the problem would be mitigated.

8. Regarding Blacks, Hispanics, and immigrants from Europe and Asia, he suggests sending such children to day-care centers where they could learn standard English, while they continue to use nonstandard English at home. In other words, he favors bidialectalism.

9. Students may find Simon not only serious but formidable—and even snobbish.

CASE STUDY: ENGLISH ONLY OR BILINGUALISM?

Bilingualism in America: English Should Be the Only Language
S. I. Hayakawa

1. Hayakawa believes the English language unites Americans—immigrants and native-born alike. “Communicating with each other in a single, common tongue encourages trust, while reducing racial hostility and bigotry.” See also paragraph 5. Student answers may vary, but it is likely that they will agree that Hayakawa’s immigrant status, as mentioned in paragraph 4, lends credence to his argument.

2. Hayakawa assesses the bilingual and multilingual nations of India, Belgium, and Canada and comments on all three being “politically unstable,” with bilingualism being a “costly” effort that results in a “confusing bureaucratic nightmare.”

3. Ideally, Hayakawa would like bilingual education to “employ a child’s native language to teach him or her English.” But its biggest flaw (as bilingual education exists now) is the maintenance of the immigrant child’s native language rather than early acquisition of English. Paragraph 19 further details the problems with English being taught as a separate subject.
4. Hayakawa first suggests (refer to paragraph 26) early English instruction to prevent segregation. However, his proposed alternative is to make English our nation’s official language by law. This action would “send the proper signal to newcomers about the importance of necessary guidance to legislators to preserve our traditional policy of a common language” (paragraph 31).

**EXPLORING THE LANGUAGE OF VISUALS:**

“Please Do Not Feed Pigeons”

1. The sign could convey the message that English is the dominant language spoken (either monolingual or bilingual speakers) in this neighborhood. Or it could indicate that the dominant language is Chinese—why have a sign written in Chinese at all if many people were not speaking it?

2. Student answers will vary.

3. Open to discussion, but consider other types of signs that convey more important messages. Could lack of communication via signs lead to disasters of any kind?

**A Nation Divided by One Language**

James Crawford

1. Crawford feels this attitude reveals a patriotic subtext. The thinking is that if you reject bilingual education, you support the idea that “in the United States, English and only English is appropriate for use in the public square.”

2. Crawford is against the overturning of bilingual education programs because he feels those who support such action are politically and
culturally threatened. This position is made clear in paragraph 6 of his essay when he identifies the supporter’s mindset as a “problem.”

3. He acknowledges this perception of immigrants refusing to learn English but says it is outdated: “Americans who came of age before the 1970s had little experience of linguistic diversity.” Validity of this argument is open to discussion.

4. Some Americans think that bilingual education threatens the power of English and their way of life as well. Bilingual schooling, then, becomes a “lightening rod for political attacks from people concerned about immigration policy, cultural change and the expansion of minority rights.”

5. According to the author, bilingual education is increasingly promoted as a form of multicultural enrichment. However, conservatives misinterpret this term to be encouraging interest in, perhaps, too many cultures within society rather than the mainstream culture. While “in a global economy more multilingualism, not less, would clearly advance the national interest,” success stories of bilingual programs are poorly publicized so Americans remain resistant and misinformed.

**Let’s Not Say Adios To Bilingual Education**

Lourdes Rovira

1. Open to discussion.

2. The xenophobic motives described in her opening paragraph stem from her belief that the ill-informed public and politicians are unduly fearful or contemptuous of that which is foreign, especially of strangers or foreign peoples.

3. Open to discussion. Although Rovira inserts this comment about other languages (also refer students to a similar one at the end of paragraph 15), her support and examples are limited to Miami and
California where Spanish is the second language predominantly included in a bilingual education curriculum. Ask students if they can consider Rovira an advocate of bilingual education for all languages with just these two examples as her support. Also, ask students what they feel her motive is for including the obscure reference to the Urdu language. Ask the class to discuss whether they feel she takes other languages as seriously as she is Spanish.

4. Considering Senator Hayakawa’s blunt statement, students may find it in agreement with Rovira’s commentary on “language rights.” However, why do things become so problematic when the term bilingual education is mentioned? Ask students to review Rovira’s segue from language rights to bilingual education to see how far Senator Hayakawa would agree and where he would begin to disagree.

My Spanish Standoff
Gabriella Kuntz

1. The prejudice Kuntz experiences (refer students to paragraph 7) is in the form of looks, being ignored, or being suspected of criminal actions. Ironically, this prejudice has no direct link to speaking the Spanish language, just “looking” Spanish with her dark eyes and dark hair. An accent is not causing the prejudice she speaks of; therefore, students may find that her refusal to pass on her Spanish language to her children was a poor choice.

2. Kuntz’s argument is based in her feeling that her children speaking and learning another language will somehow compromise their mastery, and subsequently the power, of the English language. She also claims there is an “anti-Hispanic sentiment” in the U.S.

3. It seems that her children are against her English-only decision. Her older daughter resents the decision because she cannot participate in school events like the foreign-language fair. Yet, Kuntz considers teaching her younger daughter Spanish since she does not “look”
Spanish with her fair skin and blue eyes. Students can evaluate the effectiveness of Kuntz’s argument based on this statement alone.