

American Dream: Real or Imagined

LEARNING STRATEGIES:

Rereading, Note-taking, Prewriting, Drafting, Self-Editing, Peer Editing, Sharing and Responding

My Notes

Learning Targets

- Synthesize multiple sources in order to defend, challenge, or qualify a particular position
- Collaborate to prepare a formal academic conversation asserting a claim, presenting evidence and come to a decision.

Structured Academic Controversy

In preparation for the writing you will do on Embedded Assessment 2, you will now participate in a small-group discussion model designed to achieve three goals:

- to gain a deeper understanding of an issue
- to find common ground
- and to make a decision based on evidence and logic.

The Issue: Does the United State still provide access to the American Dream for everyone?

In this activity, you will research and defend one side of an argument:

Side A: Some would say that the American Dream is not real.

Side B: Others would suggest that with hard work and tenacity anyone could have access to the American Dream.

Side A

Yes, the American Dream is still a reality.

Side B

No, the American Dream no longer exists.

Conducting Research

1. With your partner, review the reading and thinking that you have done so far in this unit using the lens of your assigned position. What evidence do you have to support your position fairly and thoroughly? Research and organize evidence to support your side of the argument and write a statement of your position or answer to the question.

Types of Evidence:

- Facts and Statistics
- Analogy (figurative or literal)
- Personal Experience or Anecdote
- Illustrative Example
- Expert/Personal Testimony
- Hypothetical Case

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Reaching Consensus: Discussion

5. At this stage of the discussion, each side abandons its side and the group of four begins to work together to build consensus regarding the prompt using evidence gathered during their initial conversation.

Publishing Your Position

6. Together, craft a position that states the group position and decide what evidence supports the consensus decision on whether the United States still provides access to the American Dream.

Getting Ready for the Embedded Assessment

7. Begin by reading and discussing the prompt from the Embedded Assessment and then brainstorming three different ways to respond to this type of prompt: by defending, challenging, or qualifying it.

Prompt: Defend, challenge, or qualify the statement that America still provides access to the American Dream.

Response 1 (Defend):

Response 2 (Challenge):

Response 3 (Qualify):

Check Your Understanding

As a group, review the texts you have read in unit 1. Brainstorm how you could use several of those texts to defend, challenge, or qualify the prompt.