

Lesson 1.2: Building a Collective Society



Define individualism

Individualism is an ideology that emphasizes independence, personal achievement, personal choice, and competition. People in individualistic cultures believe that they have the power to shape their own destiny.

What do you see as important or valuable about individualism?

What limitations or problems do you see with individualism?



Define collectivism

Collectivism is an ideology that emphasizes duty, honor, family, and social harmony. People in collectivist cultures believe that their highest purpose is doing what's best for society.

What do you see as important or valuable about collectivism?

What limitations or problems do you see with collectivism?




Discuss dominant ideology in the U.S.

Is the United States more of an individualist society or a collectivist society?

How do you know?

The American dream and the self-made man

Lesson 1.2: Building a Collective Society
Quetzalcoatl: Beautiful and Precious Knowledge



Part One: Work with a partner to create concept maps for the American Dream and the Self-Made Man. Make connections between the two concepts and reflect on how they relate to the dominant American values of individualism.

The American Dream

The Self-Made Man

Reflect: How do these two American concepts reflect individualistic values?



Write a one-sentence logline

Lesson 1.2: Building a Collective Society Quetzalcoatl: Beautiful and Precious Knowledge



Part Two: Imagine you are a screenwriter pitching a Blockbuster movie idea to Hollywood directors. A logline is a concise summary of a movie that captures its essence and entices readers to explore the entire script. **Your task is to write a one-sentence logline that incorporates the concepts of the American Dream and the self-made man.**

One-Sentence Logline Structure:

[setting] + [protagonist] + [inciting incident] + [conflict]

Example: In the roaring 1920s New York City, a determined young Irish immigrant dockworker, fueled by a passionate love for a wealthy socialite, embarks on a perilous journey to transcend his humble origins and earn her love.

...

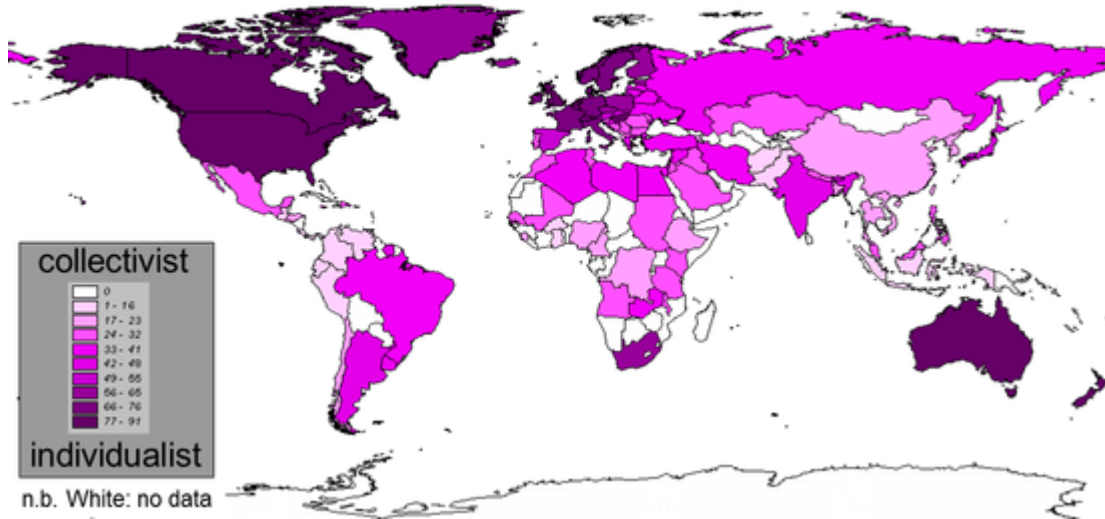
Step 1: Use the graphic organizer below to brainstorm your movie concept.

Setting	Protagonist	Inciting Incident	Conflict

Step 2: Draft your one-sentence logline.

Collectivism—Individualism world map

Collectivism – Individualism World map



What do you notice about the map?

Source: Geert Hofstede, Dutch social psychologist

Learning from alder trees

Learning from Alder - Build Community

If possible, take a walk in a forest with alder trees. If not, imagine you are there, noticing how many trees grow together and form a community. See the mosses and lichens that create a patchwork of colors on the tree trunks. Let's explore the history of this place.

Long ago this forest was burned by a fire or was clear-cut. Alder seeds traveled in on the wind and landed on the barren soil. They grew fast, as much as three feet per year, and developed a partnership with tiny bacteria in the soil. The alder invited the bacteria to live on its roots and use some of their sugary food in exchange for fixing nitrogen-an important plant food in the soil. This partnership creates fertile soil for plants to grow.

Each autumn, alder leaves fall and break down, forming rich humus on the ground that insects and other animals can live in. As alder trees grow tall, they create a shady home where other plants and animals can live. Alder twigs feed deer, elk, and moose. Small birds eat the seeds and use the trees for cover and nesting. Beavers eat alder bark and use the branches for constructing their dams. Alder protects fish and other wetland species by providing shade over streams, rivers, and ponds.

The seeds of evergreen conifer trees like cedar, hemlock, and spruce are brought into the alder grove by the wind or by animals. These seeds will grow to be trees even taller than alder. They also live longer-alders only live about 100 years, whereas evergreen conifers can live many hundreds to a thousand years. Eventually, evergreen conifer forests replace alder forests. But alder seeds will continue to travel on the wind to another disturbed site, where they can help heal the soil and start a new forest community!

Nature shows us that diversity among plants and animals is a source of strength and resilience. Every living thing requires support from the whole to survive and thrive. Is human diversity also a source of strength and unknown possibility? Skokomish Elder Bruce Miller said, "Don't teach all of our children exactly the same thing. If you teach them everything all the same, they won't need one other and the world will split apart."



Discussion

How can we use the message behind this text to build a more collective society?



Revise your logline

Part 2 Directions: Go back to your one-sentence logline. How can you tell a different story of the American Dream that integrates indigenous values of community, partnership, and collectivism?

Revised Logline Example: In 1920s New York City, a compassionate young Irish immigrant accepts a position as a dockworker, and fueled by his commitment to his community, joins forces with his fellow workers to challenge oppressive class divisions and create a more just and equitable society.



“38” by Layli Long Soldier (excerpt 2)

Lesson 1.2: Poem Analysis Part Two Quetzalcoatl: Beautiful and Precious Knowledge



Directions: Listen and read along to the poem 38 (2:42-3:38) by Layli Long Soldier, a citizen of the Ojigala Lakota nation. Annotate the poem and answer the reflection questions that follow.

38

In any case, you might be asking, “Why were thirty-eight Dakota men hung?”

As a side note, the past tense of hang is *hung*, but when referring to the capital punishment of hanging, the correct past tense is *hanged*.

So it’s possible that you’re asking, “Why were thirty-eight Dakota men hanged?”

They were hanged for the Sioux Uprising.

I want to tell you about the Sioux Uprising, but I don’t know where to begin.

I may jump around and details will not unfold in chronological order.

Keep in mind, I am not a historian.

So I will recount facts as best as I can, given limited resources and understanding.

Before Minnesota was a state, the Minnesota region, generally speaking, was the traditional homeland for Dakota, Anishinaabeg, and Ho-Chunk people.

During the 1800s, when the US expanded territory, they “purchased” land from the Dakota people as well as the other tribes.

But another way to understand that sort of “purchase” is: Dakota leaders ceded land to the US government in exchange for money or goods, but most importantly, the safety of their people.

According to Long Soldier, what is challenging about sharing a counternarrative?

During the 1800s, Dakota leaders ceded land to the United States government. Why? How does this decision demonstrate collectivist values?