



## **An Exploration of Self, a Look into Muslim American Stories**

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This curriculum unit is recommended for: IB MYP English I and Honors English I

**Keywords:** narratives, expressive, reflective, writing, experience, real-world, story, Muslim American, stereotypes, perspective

**Teaching Standards:** See [Appendix 1](#) for teaching standards addressed in this unit.

**Synopsis:** In this unit, students will create narratives that express and reflect on their personal life experiences. It is the goal of this unit to create an opportunity for students to explore themselves and reflect on the moments that helped shape who they are now. The unit's anchor texts were written by Muslim Americans, whose unique perspectives help fill the gap between stereotypes and truth. By sharing their stories, the authors challenge readers' preconceived notions, while simultaneously challenging readers to explore the gaps that their own personal stories fill. This unit aligns with the North Carolina teaching standards for ninth grade English students, as well as the IB MYP program's 5th year standards. Therefore, the final assessment asks students to express and reflect on something personal and meaningful to them. It is the hope of this unit that through the final assignment, students will think through their own history and become better for it.

***I plan to teach this unit during the coming year to 236 students in ninth grade IB MYP English I.***

***I give permission for Charlotte Teachers Institute to publish my curriculum unit in print and online. I understand that I will be credited as the author of my work.***

## **Introduction**

This is my ninth-year teaching English in the Charlotte Mecklenburg School System: for five years I taught middle school at Francis Bradley Middle, and for the last four, I have been a ninth-grade high school teacher at North Mecklenburg High. According to Charlotte Mecklenburg's diversity report, North Mecklenburg has a total of 2151 students with 61% of the population being Black, 21% being Hispanic, 9% are White, and 3% are Asian. North Mecklenburg is a magnet school, which is a large reason for its diversity, since many students commute from other parts of Charlotte to participate in one of the magnet programs.

For the past 3 years, I have taught 9th grade IB (International Baccalaureate) English, which accounts for almost 300 freshmen every year. Most IB students are highly motivated, as this is an elective program, so disruptive behavior problems tend to not be a huge problem in class. This does allow for time to explore diverse content, as students tend to thirst for unique topics that aren't mundane and allow them the opportunity to form and express their opinions.

One unique feature of the IB program is the way in which the lessons are planned. We, as IB teachers, plan around concepts and questions we'd like the students to explore. Some of the concepts include change, communication, communities, identity, systems, and relationships. And we pose exploratory questions like: *What does it mean to be American? Is the American dream attainable or fantastical?* The goal is to prepare students for university-level work by focusing on creating life-long learners who are critical thinkers, capable of deep investigation and analysis. Another huge component of this magnet program is service learning. Also, built into the program are required community service hours in which students are encouraged to choose a passion project that challenges them and inspires them. Being that my students are all a part of this program, I am building my curriculum unit around the IB standards and goals, which includes using IB concepts, criteria, and rubrics.

## **Objective**

The unit's objective is straightforward and simple: allow students to write their own story and be transformed by it. Through the semester, I have discovered various Muslim American artists who express themselves through things like rap, writing and painting. No matter the medium, they tell their story, their journey as a child of Allah in America. Since personal or narrative writing is scarcely explored in my field, I thought this the perfect opportunity to build a curriculum unit that allowed students the opportunity to write about themselves, for themselves. In teaching this unit, I urge teachers to listen to the way these authors express themselves in their texts. Not only will these voices allow students access into the experiences of a highly marginalized group, but they might see themselves in ways they may not expect. I know that is what happened to me and many of my counterparts throughout the course of the seminar. Once they've explored another's journey, this unit plan will allow them to explore their own.

## **Rationale**

Through my seminar, *CTI: Narratives of Muslim life in America*, I have come to understand the importance of storytelling, and more importantly, the importance of telling your own story. As I explored texts like Zareena Grewal's *Islam is A Foreign Country* and Malcolm X's autobiography and listened to teachings by Edward Said and the narratives of various Muslim Americans, I realized how ignorant I was to the beliefs and lives of this community. Through our weekly meetings and discussions, I believe that a lot of ignorance comes from story suppression. I mean, how could anyone truly know the full story if all parties involved are not given the opportunity to share? Political and social agendas, coupled with mass media's current goals dictate whose stories get told, and how and when those stories are told. Story suppression can also be seen in movies, books, and other forms of entertainment. Although we see entertainment outlets attempting to correct these errors with major streaming apps like Netflix and Hulu offering collections titled "Representation Matters" and "Black Stories," there are still plenty of opportunities, especially in education, to allow more voices into the conversation. In order to do my part in starting this conversation, I will use Muslim American narratives as the anchor texts for the expressive and reflective skill building that is the cornerstone of this unit.

Since the IB program prides itself on investigative learning, I want to focus on having students investigate themselves and their own experiences after reading examples from Muslim American writers who have done the same. In my mind, writing is the best medium for this type of work. Throughout the unit, students will write personal narratives that help them investigate a significant personal experience in their life.

Too often students go through high school never really analyzing their lived experiences and the impact that has had on their beliefs, habits or behaviors. Joyce Meyer, an evangelical preacher and author, often says that we live life forward, but we understand it backwards. As an avid writer who journals religiously every day, this has been my experience. I realize that my daily writing has allowed me to understand my participation in my own life, and the effects that my decisions, or lack thereof, has had on who I am. Writing is unique in that it allows you to explore the past, while simultaneously shaping the present and building the future.

By this unit's end, I would like for my students to understand that we are all active participants in our lives, whether we believe it or not. Writing is an excellent conduit for helping to unveil this truth. Not only will they have the opportunity to reflect on their life and the factors that situated them in this time and space, they will also be able to write themselves into new identities, for narration is a way to create oneself, just like the Muslim American authors students we engage with throughout their reading. These authors explore their sense of self in an Islamophobic age and attempt to make sense of it. This means that through their writing, they will become—who and what they become is personal, undefined, and yet to be discovered. It is

the goal of this unit to have students launch a deep investigation into themselves and grow healthily through the process.

## **Content Research**

### *Significance of Muslim Narratives*

Muslims, especially those who were born or raised in America, walk a unique line. In many of their stories, readers see them attempt to find balance being and having the American dream and meeting all the norms and expectations that come with being a Muslim. America, like many western nations, is known for championing individualism, autonomy and finding one's own way to make their mark on the world, which in many ways could differ from so many Muslim ideals. Through the seminar, I have learned just how close the Muslim community is. Togetherness and community are written into every practice, the way they speak, addressing each other as my sister and my brother. It's in the way they dress, taking care not to be a stumbling block or temptation for their fellow man. It's in the way they pray, together—as one. As one can imagine, American Muslim narratives are riddled with this tension and angst, both of which make for a compelling story.

In his book, *Keeping It Halal: The Everyday lives of Muslim American Boys*, John O'Brien explores this palpable tension in his chapter called, “‘The American Prayer’: Islamic Obligation and Discursive Individualism.” O'Brien details stories in which American Muslim teens attempt to balance the traditions and practices of their Muslim faith and heritage with their American ideals. My favorite anecdote illustrating this high-wire act is the opening scene of this chapter. Like many teenage boys, they make plans with their friends, but in this scenario, those plans are slightly altered by *asr* (afternoon) prayers.<sup>1</sup> The boys attempt to expedite the prayer process in order to get to their own plans, but it causes them to break a cultural norm: corporate prayer. The entire exchange ends with these memorable lines:

We walk out into the main lobby and then turn into the side office, where Muhammad and a few other boys start talking, apparently about this idea of the “American prayer,” to Ibrahim, an Indian man who works there. Muhammad asks him, “If it's not an American mosque, then why is there an American flag out front?” “Yeah,” Fuad replies. Ibrahim says, calmly, “Yes, but that is outside the mosque. We are inside the mosque; it is different.”<sup>2</sup>

The boys truly did not see the harm of breaking from the traditional Islamic norms. Their individual-minded instincts, the one every American has been inculcated with since birth, wasn't

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<sup>1</sup> John O'Brien, *Keeping It Halal: The Everyday Lives of Muslim American Teenage Boys* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017), 51.

<sup>2</sup> O'Brien, *Keeping It Halal*, 52.

welcomed in this moment. Prayer in the mosque was meant to be corporate and communal, not separate and individual. Through this anecdote, readers watch these Muslim American teens walk a tight rope, constantly playing negotiator for both sides. The fallout of this moment kept replaying itself throughout the chapter and was played out through the extreme Muslim trope. But it was in this chapter and through these anecdotes that I came to realize why Muslim narratives are essential to this unit's success.

In this unit, I ask students to explore all parts of themselves via writing. I ask them to navigate the tension of their own lives, in hopes that they would pull out meaning from some of the most joyful and most painful parts of their lives. This, essentially, is what all of the poems, stories, and song lyrics do in the narratives of Muslim Americans. They wrestle with all the ideals, all the subtle and vast differences, all the judgement from both sides and attempt to extract or give meaning to it. It's quite beautiful.

As students read through these stories, it's important that they start with open minds. The goal isn't to judge experiences, but simply to understand that we all have our own. We all have our own stories to tell—the moments that make us and build us. In *Keeping It Halal*, O'Brien argues that our experiences aren't much different from that of Muslim Americans attempting to navigate their dual identities. We all, especially as teenagers, find ourselves caught between expectation and want, perception and reality. Take for instance the *Hagar Poems* by Mohja Kahf: the speaker's life is told through the story of Hagar, a revered woman in the Islamic faith.<sup>3</sup> Mohja was able to read the story of Hagar and see the everyday experience of so many women in the faith (and even outside the faith). From a place of understanding, not judgement, she writes these beautiful narrative poems that grant both insight and revelation of a woman's experiences.

Although learning expressive and reflective writing skills is the main goal focus of this unit, it's the stories they encounter throughout this unit that will make this goal achievable. The American Muslim stories I've included serve as templates for students to write their own stories, so someone else can look, read and journey to understanding.

### *Building stronger writers*

Kelly Gallagher starts his first chapter off with a great question: "Do your students write well enough to become police officers?"<sup>4</sup> Writing skills are often undermined in today's school system. Given our technologically advanced world, it is easy to see how they fell by the wayside. Like many school districts, Charlotte Mecklenburg stopped administering writing exams to their students in 4th, 7th and 10th grade. Unfortunately, whenever something ceases to be tested, the

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<sup>3</sup> Mohja Kahf, *Hagar Poems* (The University of Arkansas Press, 2016).

<sup>4</sup> Kelly Gallagher, *Write like This: Teaching Real-World Writing through Modeling & Mentor Texts* (Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers, 2011), 1

skills associated with passing the test fail to hold importance. Plus, trying to build better writers is quite the task for any teacher, so I understand the temptation to dismiss writing all together. However, I would argue that effective writing skills are more important than ever. There are so many ways we have to use writing to communicate: email, text messages, tweeting. This creates a necessity for students (and adults) to learn how to effectively articulate their thoughts via writing, no matter the medium.

According to Gallagher, approximately 90% of the teachers he meets would say that their students aren't writing enough.<sup>5</sup> This, he argues, is because the foundation for writing often goes unestablished. We attempt to get students to write without telling them why they should write. This is a grave mistake, as it leaves no room for intrinsic motivation or the opportunity for students to find value in their writing. Two key premises in his *Write like This: Teaching Real-world Writing Through Modeling and Mentor Texts* include introducing “young writers to real-world discourses” and providing “students with extensive teacher and real-world models.”<sup>6</sup> I have adopted this reasoning in my approach to teaching students writing. In this unit, there will be opportunities for teachers to utilize real-world examples of everyday writing tasks, as well as opportunities for students to practice real-world writing. Also, I have found that providing students with mentor texts helps them see what's expected of them, so they can visualize and create. Along with mentor texts, teachers will utilize “non-examples,” an idea I first came across in a blog post by former teacher, Ian Byrd. Byrd argues, “If a high-quality example raises the ceiling of what students see is possible, the non-example raises *the floor*.”<sup>7</sup> Mentor texts set the bar, especially for gifted students, but non examples help struggling writers know what to avoid. Having these two principles as a framework will set the stage for the express and reflective writing that is required throughout the unit.

### *Defining Expressive and Reflective Writing*

In order to accomplish the unit's goals, it is important for students to understand expressive and reflective writing and the differences between two, as most of their writing will be in this form. Kelly Gallagher., defines and differentiates the two as follows:

<b>Expressive Writing</b>	<b>Reflective Writing</b> <sup>8</sup>
“First, and foremost, expressive writing is personal writing. The writer shares thoughts, ideas, feelings, and questions about his or her experiences. Usually written in first-person	“Though also personal, reflective writing often moves beyond recounting an experience and into an exploration of how that particular experience has shaped the writer. The goal of

<sup>5</sup> Gallagher, *Write like This*, 2

<sup>6</sup> Gallagher, *Write like This*, 1

<sup>7</sup> Ian Byrd, “Talking Less: Use Examples and Non-Examples.” Web log. *Byrdseed* (blog).

<sup>8</sup> Gallagher, *Write like This*, 25

<p>point of view, it exhibits the author’s voice. The author tells the reader how he or she feels.”</p>	<p>reflective writing is not to share final thoughts on a topic; on the contrary, it is a vehicle for exploring and discovering new thoughts. In reflective writing, the author often looks at the past as a means for looking at the future.”</p>
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Not only is this a good working definition for teachers, it is extremely helpful for students to use as a framework as they produce their own pieces throughout the unit. The best narrative writing is both expressive and reflective. For example, a student can express their feelings about their parents’ divorce and recount the details of the story; but then, once they are done narrating the story, they can move into reflecting on the new insight they have gained through this experience.

*Reasons for Using These Forms of Writing*

Narratives provide quick access for writers to get comfortable with the expression. There is already plenty of material, being that students who participate in this unit are likely old enough to have racked up a few lively stories to share. Also, personal narratives seem to be a lot less intimidating for students because they are literally speaking from and about their own experiences. Van Galen, a professor in the School of Educational Studies at UW Bothell, stated that “When students are asked to share their own stories within the context of what they’re learning in class, the lessons become more deep-rooted.”<sup>9</sup>

Most teachers struggle with student engagement and buy-in, and one of the quickest and easiest ways to get students engaged in any topic is to ask them to talk about themselves. If we as educators can make the curriculum personal and relevant to our students, they tend to perk up and listen. In a generation where everyone is fighting to be heard, this is easy to understand. Giving them the opportunity to reflect on what they are reading by asking them questions like, *do I agree with this, how do I feel about what said, or what’s my opinion on the topic and where does it come from?* This is the strongest reason I have found for utilizing personal narratives. It increases student engagement when they are able to express their thoughts and opinions, no matter what the topic is.

**Teaching Strategies**

*Writing Prompts*<sup>10</sup>

These writing prompts are from Kelly Gallagher’s *Write like This: Teaching Real-world Writing Through Modeling and Mentor Texts*. They are designated as warm-ups. It should be noted that

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<sup>9</sup> “The Power of Personal Narratives in the Classroom,” *Trends and Issues in Higher Ed*, January 25 2017, <https://washington.edu/trends/the-power-of-personal-narratives-in-the-classroom/>.

<sup>10</sup> Gallagher, *Write like This*.

not all warm-ups have to be used; however, the “Hard Moments” warm-up is highly recommended as it is an opportunity for students to practice their expressive and reflective writing. Also, depending on the intent, whether to share answers with the class or allow privacy, there is a list of useful platforms: *padlet.com*, *Google Docs*, *Flipgrid*, *Formative*, *AudioNote*, *BackChannel Chat*.

### 1. Six-word memoirs

Students write their memoirs in exactly six words. It can be 6 words that take their entire life into account or maybe just their present moment in time.

#### Examples:

- All things considered, I'm doing well
- The past is forgiven, not forgotten
- So the water's deep. Man up.
- My plan is to attend college

### 2. Twitter post memoirs

Expand on your 6-word memoir. Write a 280 character or less memoir.

*Resources: Google Doc (to get character count); then students post on [Padlet.com](https://padlet.com)*

#### Examples:

- Life has had its ups and down lately, but by all accounts, I am doing pretty well. So I won't complain because a lot of people are doing a lot worse than me. (158 characters)
- I don't dwell on the past because that would be a waste of time. The memory of the wrongs still pop up in my mind, though. So now I am cautious of people, but I have to forgive. It's healthy to let things go so they don't fester. (229 characters)

### 3. Sentence Starters

This is a good way to move students into reflecting and will prepare them for the Hard Moments warm-up.

#### Example:

- I appreciate \_\_\_\_\_ because...
- I appreciate writers because it is risky to share your thinking
- I appreciate quiet because I rarely appreciate it.

### 4. Encyclopedia of an Ordinary Life

Choose 2-3 letters from the alphabet to write about a section of your life. Whatever you want to write about is up to you. The first word of the write-up does not have to start with the letter of the alphabet, but you must expand on the word you choose in the write-up.

#### Student Examples:

- **Addiction**



Some people become addicted to alcohol or drugs. My favorite game, *Modern Warfare 2*, is my addiction. Once I start playing it I cannot stop. There is a surprising twist at the end, and then the whole cycle again. I need to stop the madness!

- **Sweeping**

It is pretty much the hardest method of guitar playing known. Practicing it is a hassle, and I never seem to get better. I practice every day--it's the only way --but I wish it wasn't.

## 5. **Hard Moments Part (1/2)**

Students create a list of hard moments in their life. Give them 5m to write a list. Then, ask students to highlight moments on their list that were not only difficult, but taught them something.

### **Student Example topics:**

- Realizing my parents have left me
- Getting lost in Disneyland
- Leaving my home country
- Having appendicitis
- Having to choose which parent to live with

Once students are finished highlighting their responses, let them know there will be a part two tomorrow, so give some thoughts to the details of the story and the lesson that they learned.

## 6. **Hard Moments Part (2/2)**

This can be a warm-up on a 6th day or it can be a homework assignment on the 5th day. Students write down their highlighted hard moments from the day before. They will choose one to write and reflect on, using the strategies learned throughout the lessons.

### **Prompt:**

Tell the story of one of your hard moments, the one whose lesson you'd like to share. In 5-7 sentences, retell the details, then reflect on what that moment means to you today. What lessons have you learned and how it has impacted your life.

### *Journal*

Throughout the unit, students will answer the question, **based on the writer's use of expressive and reflective details, what have you come to understand about his or her life?**

They should journal their answers each time they write, so they have the opportunity to look back on what they've built and what they've come to understand about expressive and reflective details and their critical role in narrative writing.

### *Mentor Text/Read Aloud:*

Mentor texts will show students examples of expressive and reflective writing, as well as the transformative nature of expressing your thoughts via writing

- “A Mistake That Should Last a Lifetime” by Jessanne Collins
- *Lailiah’s Lunchbox* by Reem Faruqi, Lea Lyon (Illustrator)
- “‘The American Prayer’: Islamic Obligation and Discursive Individualism” in *Keeping It Halal* by John O’Brien
- *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, chapters 17 and 18 (chapters)
- “The First Thing”, “The Water of Hajar”, and “Hajar in America” by Mohja Kahf (poems)

*Color Coding Text:*

Students will color code the texts that they are reading to differentiate when the author is expressing their thoughts and feelings and when they are reflecting on the lessons those experiences helped them learn.

*Exit Ticket*

Every day, students will complete an exit ticket every day. The ticket will ask the students to reflect on the day’s reading and how it is a form of expressive and or reflective writing.

**Classroom Lesson and Activities**

<b>Day 1: Introduction</b>		
<b>Resources:</b> excerpt: “‘The American Prayer’: Islamic Obligation and Discursive Individualism.”		
<b>1. Warm-up:</b> Have students complete the ‘Before Reading’ section of the chart.		
	<b>Before Reading</b>	<b>After Reading</b>
What do facts do you know about Muslim faith, culture beliefs?		
What stereotypes do you have, or have you heard about Muslim faith, culture beliefs?		
What stereotypes do you have, or have you heard about Muslim faith, culture beliefs?		
<b>2. Read “American Prayer” section with students’ whole class.</b>		
As you read, ask students to jot down any thoughts they have that pertain to the warm-up		

topic. They can make side notes, just to get their thoughts ready to discuss.

**3. Objective summary presentation of chapter’s sections**

Students are divided into 4 groups, one reading section per group. They should continue to jot notes as they read. Let them know that they will present their chapter to the class. Their presentation will be an objective give summary of the section’s examples, main points, and significant details.

- Autonomy in Religious Action: Controlling the When of One’s Prayer (55-62)  
*This chapter may be reserved for your stronger, faster readers since it’s the longest.*
- Invoking the “Extreme Muslim” to Project Reflexivity and Protect Autonomy (62-68)
- The “Extreme Muslim” and Interpersonal Religious Accountability (68-71)
- Emphasizing Individual Effort in the Realization of Religious Behavior (71-75)

**4. Students take the remainder of class to organize presentation.** (May require time on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day)

**Day 2:**

**1. Warm-up**

Students finish composing summary presentations and preparing to present their information

**2. Summary presentations**

The goal should to give an accurate summary of the section, so audience feels that they have read the chapter and understand its information. While students are presenting, audience members should record details from each chapter (3-5) from each presentation.

Section title	Presentation Notes
Autonomy in Religious Action: Controlling the When of One’s Prayer (55-62)	
Invoking the “Extreme Muslim” to Project Reflexivity and Protect Autonomy (62-68)	
The “Extreme Muslim” and Interpersonal Religious Accountability (68-71)	
Emphasizing Individual Effort in the Realization of Religious Behavior (71-75)	

**Day 3:**

**Resources:** *Lailah's Lunchbox* by Reem Faruqi

**1. Warm-up prompt**

## 2. Turn and Talk

Ask students to distinguish between expressive and reflective writing in their groups. Students can make a T-chart or Venn diagram to communicate their ideas

## 3. Expressive and Reflective Writing Notes

After sharing students' answers, give students Gallagher's definition of expressive and reflective writing.

## 4. Read *Lailah's Lunchbox* by Reem Faruqi

Individually, students read the children's book; while reading, students complete *Expressive and Reflective T-Chart*

Students can complete the T-Chart individually, and then share their answers together.

## 5. Exit Ticket Journal Entry #1

*Based on the writer's use of expressive and reflective details, what have you come to understand about his or her life?*

Students should journal their answers and then post it to a platform like Padlet or GoFormative.

## Day 4

**Resources:** *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, YouTube video of Malcolm X bio, post-it notes

\*This may be a two-day lesson, depending on student's familiarity with color coding texts.

### 1. Warm-up prompt

### 2. Watch Malcolm X - Civil Rights Activist | Mini Bio | BIO on YouTube

This will help provide a little background knowledge on Malcolm X before reading the chapters from his autobiographies.

### 3. Model color coding Autobiographies, Chapter 17 of *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*

- i. Read through the first page of the biography with students, highlighting expressive details in one color and reflective in another.
- ii. Have students work with a group to read and color code pages 2 and 3.
- iii. Show students a non-example of color-coding a text. *What should they not do? What would not be an effective way to complete the task?*
  - I like to show students a completely highlighted version of the text, where a student has highlighted every line. I tell them that this is not color coding, this is coloring, which isn't the objective of the academic task.
  - I also I have students define the word 'significant' and as I model, I we discuss significant details verses insignificant details.

### 4. Class T-chart

- Create a T-chart on the board. Have each group choose one expressive detail from the text to put on one post-it notes, and a reflective detail on a second post-it.
- Students post their notes on the right side of the T-chart
- Students continue to read chapter 17 of Malcolm's autobiography. At the end of class, students will post their own individual notes (one expressive, one reflective) on the class T-chart.

### 6. Exit Ticket Journal Entry #2

*Based on the Malcolm's use of expressive and reflective details, what have you come to understand about his or her life?*

### 5. Homework: Students color code *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* on chapter 18

## Day 5

**Resources:** GoFormative or Padlet (for answers), “The First Thing”, “The Water of Hajar”, and “Hajar in America”

**1. Warm-up prompt**

**2. Review student highlights from chapter 18**

This is just a brief review, no longer than 10m. Based on their homework, students should provide an answer to the following question: *Based on Malcolm’s use of expressive and reflective details, what have you come to understand about his or her life?* (Journal #3)

**3. Brief background on Hajar and her significance to the Muslim faith.**

You can research this for yourself and create a PowerPoint to share or you can give students an overview before reading the poems, so they have context.

**4. Class Read Aloud of “The First Thing”**

Read the poem out loud to the class or ask someone to read. When reading poetry, it is good practice to read all the way through and then go back a second time using a strategy like SOAPStone or TPCASTT, especially if you have struggling readers. Even if choosing not to utilize a strategy, it is helpful for students to read the poem twice.

Ask students to color code expressive and reflective details in the second read.

**5. Read and color code “The Water of Hajar” and “Hajar in America”**

**6. Exit Ticket Journal Entry #4**

*Based on the speaker’s use of expressive and reflective details, what have you come to understand about his or her life?*

## Day 6

**Resources:** “A Mistake That Should Last a Lifetime”, Expressive and Reflective T-Chart, My Favorite Mistake assignment

**1. Warm-up prompt**

**2. Read “A Mistake That Should Last a Lifetime” by Jessanne Collins**

Have students color code the text. Students need one highlight color for expressive details and a second for reflective details. Read the passage with students, and after each paragraph, ask students whether the paragraph is communication expressive or reflective details. They should highlight accordingly.

**3. Expressive and Reflective T-Chart**

Students complete T-Chart based on their reading.

**4. Exit Ticket Journal Entry #5**

*Based on the speaker’s use of expressive and reflective details, what have you come to understand about his or her life?*

Teachers can use a platform like Padlet or GoFormative to collect quick answers.

**5. Assign final product**

Final Product should be assigned before the last day so students have time to think about the project before they take a class period to work on it.

**Final Assignment:** My Favorite Mistake

**Directions:** Make a list of your favorite mistakes. Choose a mistake that you feel you've learned the greatest lesson from. Once you've chosen, produce a text that both expresses and reflects on this lesson. Make sure your title's piece is creative and befitting for your story. (Students can choose to turn their Hard Moments warm-up into an essay if they prefer.)

**Requirements:**

1. List out your favorite mistakes
2. Complete Expressive/Reflective Graphic organizer of the mistake you've chosen
3. Choose 1 of 2 options to articulate your favorite mistake:

<b>Poem</b> (3-5 entries)	<b>Essay</b> (300-500 words)
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**Day 6**

**Resources:** Expressive/Reflective Graphic organizer

**1. Warm-up**

Students re-read their 5 journal entries and reflect on what they've learned so far about Muslim American life in America. Students complete 'After reading' on the chart they created on day 1.

**2. Expressive/Reflective Graphic Organizer**

Students use Favorite Mistake Graphic Organizer to begin organizing their ideas for their paper.

This serves as a great opportunity to walk around and provide feedback, ensuring that chart topics have enough depth for effective expressive and reflective writing.

**3. Students begin working on the assignment in class, while you're available for questions and feedback.**

## Appendix: Implementing Teaching Standards

### Appendix 1: *Teaching Standards*

#### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.3

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

#### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

#### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.5

Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.

#### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.7

Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person's life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account.

### *MYP Key Concepts*

**Identity** is the state or fact of being the same. It refers to the particular features that define individuals, groups, things, eras, places, symbols and styles. Identity can be observed, or it can be constructed, asserted and shaped by external and internal influences.

**Form** is the shape and underlying structure of an entity or piece of work, including its organization, essential nature and external appearance.

**Perspective** is the position from which we observe situations, objects, facts, ideas and opinions. Perspective may be associated with individuals, groups, cultures or disciplines. Different perspectives often lead to multiple representations and interpretations.

## Appendix 2: IB Rubrics, C and D

*Criterion C: Producing text*

*Maximum: 8*

*At the end of year 5, students should be able to:*

- i. produce texts that demonstrate insight, imagination and sensitivity while exploring and reflecting critically on new perspectives and ideas arising from personal engagement with the creative process
- ii. make stylistic choices in terms of linguistic, literary and visual devices, demonstrating awareness of impact on an audience

<b>Achievement level</b>	<b>Level descriptor</b>
0	The student <b>does not</b> reach a standard described by any of the descriptors below.
1–2	The student: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. produces texts that demonstrate <b>limited</b> personal engagement with the creative process; demonstrates a <b>limited</b> degree of insight, imagination and sensitivity and <b>minimal</b> exploration of, and critical reflection on, new perspectives and ideas</li> <li>ii. makes <b>minimal</b> stylistic choices in terms of linguistic, literary and visual devices, demonstrating <b>limited</b> awareness of impact on an audience</li> </ol>
3–4	The student: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. produces texts that demonstrate <b>adequate</b> personal engagement with the creative process; demonstrates <b>some</b> insight, imagination and sensitivity and <b>some</b> exploration of, and critical reflection on, new perspectives and ideas</li> <li>ii. makes <b>some</b> stylistic choices in terms of linguistic, literary and visual devices, demonstrating <b>adequate</b> awareness of impact on an audience</li> </ol>
5–6	The student: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. produces texts that demonstrate <b>considerable</b> personal engagement with the creative process; demonstrates <b>considerable</b> insight, imagination and sensitivity and <b>substantial</b> exploration of, and critical reflection on, new perspectives and ideas</li> <li>ii. makes <b>thoughtful</b> stylistic choices in terms of linguistic, literary and visual devices, demonstrating <b>good</b> awareness of impact on an audience</li> </ol>
7–8	The student: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. produces texts that demonstrate a <b>high degree</b> of personal engagement with the creative process; demonstrates a <b>high degree</b> of insight, imagination and sensitivity and <b>perceptive</b> exploration of, and critical reflection on, new perspectives and ideas</li> </ol>



	ii. makes <b>perceptive</b> stylistic choices in terms of linguistic, literary and visual devices, demonstrating <b>good</b> awareness of impact on an audience
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**Criterion D: Using language**

**Maximum: 8**

*At the end of year 5, students should be able to:*

- ii. write and speak in a register and style that serve the context and intention
- iii. use correct grammar, syntax and punctuation
- iv. spell (alphabetic languages), write (character languages) and pronounce with accuracy

<b>Achievement level</b>	<b>Level descriptor</b>
0	The student <b>does not</b> reach a standard described by any of the descriptors below.
1–2	The student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. writes and speaks in an <b>inappropriate</b> register and style that <b>do not</b> serve the context and intention</li> <li>ii. uses grammar, syntax and punctuation with <b>limited</b> accuracy; errors <b>often hinder</b> communication</li> <li>iii. spells/writes and pronounces with <b>limited</b> accuracy; errors <b>often hinder</b> communication</li> </ul>
3–4	The student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <b>sometimes</b> writes and speaks in a register and style that serve the context and intention</li> <li>ii. uses grammar, syntax and punctuation with <b>some degree</b> of accuracy; errors <b>sometimes hinder</b> communication</li> <li>iii. spells/writes and pronounces with <b>some degree</b> of accuracy; errors <b>sometimes hinder</b> communication</li> </ul>
5–6	The student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. writes and speaks <b>competently</b> in a register and style that serve the context and intention</li> <li>ii. uses grammar, syntax and punctuation with a <b>considerable degree</b> of accuracy; errors <b>do not hinder</b> effective communication</li> <li>iii. spells/writes and pronounces with a <b>considerable degree</b> of accuracy; errors <b>do not hinder</b> effective communication</li> </ul>

7-8	<p>The student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="407 247 1446 317">i. writes and speaks in a <b>consistently appropriate</b> register and style that serve the context and intention</li><li data-bbox="407 321 1446 390">ii. uses grammar, syntax and punctuation with a <b>high degree</b> of accuracy; errors are minor and communication is <b>effective</b></li><li data-bbox="407 394 1471 464">iii. spells/writes and pronounces with a <b>high degree</b> of accuracy; errors are minor and communication is <b>effective</b></li></ul>
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**Appendix 3: Favorite Mistake Graphic Organizer**

What was my favorite mistake?	
<b>Expression</b>	<b>Reflection</b>
What details do I recall surrounding that mistake (before/during/after)?	Looking back at the event, have I learned from the experience? What do I take from the mistake?

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**Appendix 4: Expressive and Reflective T-Chart**

<b>Expressive Writing</b>	<b>Quote/details from the text</b>	<b>Thoughts or Questions</b>
<b>Reflective Writing</b>	<b>Quote/details from the text</b>	<b>Thoughts or Questions</b>

**Students Resources**

“A Mistake That Should Last a Lifetime”

The cornerstone text, “A Mistake That Should Last a Lifetime,” is the example students will follow in order to write their own essay. If they choose another medium, like a poem or a video, they can still follow the outline of the text: expressing details of a personal narrative and then reflecting on the event.

*Malcolm X - Civil Rights Activist / Mini Bio / BIO on YouTube*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9a3hT8f6Kkk>

In order to familiarize students with Malcolm X, they should watch this brief biography. It will help contextualize the chapters from his autobiographies.

*Lailiah’s Lunchbox*

Students start with this text, as it is simple and easy to understand. Since the text is easily accessible, it will allow students to concentrate on learning how authors use expressive details versus reflective details.

### *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*

Students will not read the entire biography, but they will read chapters 17 and 18. These chapters highlight Malcolm's transformation throughout his trip to Mecca. He is very detail-oriented, so students have a lot of opportunity to see expressive, narrative details. Malcolm also spent a fair amount of time reflecting on the lessons he learned on his journey.

“The First Thing,” “The Water of Hajar”, and “Hajar in America” by Mohja Kahf

Although this unit is not heavily focused on poetry, these poems are accessible for students as long as they are contextualized. Students will need background knowledge on Hagar's significance to Islam in order to fully understand the poem. Once they have that knowledge, students can discern between the speaker's narration and reflection. They should use this as an example if they choose to write a poem for their final project.

### **Teacher Resources**

#### *GoFormative.com*

This website allows teachers to give real-time feedback to students. Students post their answers, and teachers can respond or make corrections on the site. Posts can be displayed privately, so that only the teacher can see.

#### *Padlet*

Padlet is another tool teachers can use to receive real-time posts from students. This is best for quick responses to prompts. All students in the class will be able to access the Padlet and see each other's responses.

#### *Rubrics*

Students will be assessed using IB rubrics C and D. Rubric C will be used twice, once in an informal, strictly formative manner, and the second as a formal final assessment that notes how much they've grown and learned since the first assessment. Rubric D will only be used in the final assessment task, as it is used for assessing language proficiency and relevance within a text.

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