Introduction
Note to Any Teacher Thinking About Possibly Using This Unit

July 28, 2004

Dear Teacher,

In this notebook are the first four lessons for a unit on "Coming of Age/Initiation Rites of Passage," modified to make these lessons more accessible to students who are still learning English. Although I developed this unit for an English class at my alternative high school, this unit also could be used in a Social Studies class; furthermore, this unit would work in a traditional high school or a regular middle school.

If you would like to extend this unit beyond these four lessons, I first would suggest developing two lessons based on Chapter 4 of Nelson Mandela's autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom*, published by Little, Brown, and Company in 1995. (To get started on this, look in the appendix of this report and see my "Original Lesson 2" and my "Original Lesson 3"; the text for Mandela’s chapter is in the "Original Lesson 2" pocket.) After that chapter, I would base additional lessons on *Making the Corps* by Thomas E. Ricks, published by Simon & Schuster in 1998; this is a detailed account of recruits’ initiation into the U.S. Marine Corps.

Finally, any teacher attracted to using this universal concept of rites of passage could develop similar units based on other rites of passage such as birth, marriage, and death.

Sincerely,

Mark McGrath

English teacher

Enlightenment School

Waterbury CT
UNIT SELECTION

1. **Title:** Coming of Age/Initiation Rites of Passage

2. **Grade Level:** mixed grade level (9-12)

3. **Target Group:** mainstream English class with integrated ELL students


5. **Source of Lessons:** Mark McGrath, English teacher at Enlightenment School, Waterbury, Conn.

6. **Learning Goals:** I want my students to know what rites of passage are.
   
   I want my students to know more about other cultures.

   I want my students to know the significance of coming-of-age initiation rites of passage.

   I want my students to know how a culture transmits values.

   I want my students to know what questions to ask people they interview.

   I want my students to know how to write a “thank you” letter.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LANGUAGE</th>
<th>CONTENT</th>
<th>LEARNING STRATEGIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SKILLS</td>
<td>1. Articulate and write examples of rites of passage; 2. Articulate sequence of events; 3. Read for information; 4. Respond verbally to comprehension, inference, and opinion questions; 5. Write responses to short-answer comprehension, inference, and opinion questions; 6. Write a ‘thank you’ letter; 7. Write a letter to a friend, explaining a rite from participant’s point of view</td>
<td>1. List rites of passage verbally and in writing; 2. Summarize sequence of events in a coming of age/initiation rite; 3. Read for information; 4. Respond verbally to comprehension, inference and opinion questions; 5. Write responses to short-answer comprehension, inference, and opinion questions; 6. Write a ‘thank you’ letter 7. Write a letter to a friend, explaining a rite from participant’s point of view</td>
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<tr>
<td>ATTITUDES/ AWARENESS</td>
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<td>Awareness of other cultures &amp; customs</td>
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Lesson 1
LESSON 1 in Unit on “Coming of Age/Initiation: A Rite of Passage”

I. CONTENT OBJECTIVES

1. Define rites of passage

   - all ELL language levels and mainstream students will listen to this teacher-provided definition and copy it in their journals

2. List examples of rites of passage

   - Advanced, Intermediate, and Early Production ELLs, as well as mainstream students will provide examples, verbally and in writing

   - Pre-production ELLs will participate in groups given the task of listing such examples and, if necessary, use their first language to list examples

3. Identify rites of passage, from pictures

   - all students, except for Pre-production ELLs, will do this in English

   - Pre-production ELLs will use their first language to do this

II. LANGUAGE OBJECTIVES

1. Same as Content Objective 1

2. Articulate and write examples of rites of passage

   - Advanced and Intermediate ELLs – as well as mainstream students – will do this in “home groups” and in whole-class activities

   - Early Production ELLs will do this in home groups

   - Pre-production ELLs will point to names of rites of passage and may use their first language

3. Write sentences

   - Advanced and Intermediate ELLs, plus mainstream students, will write sentences
- **Early Production ELLs** will use English to complete sentences already started and may write sentences using their first language.

- **Pre-production ELLs** will complete sentences in English with help from other students or in their first language.
### III. Functional/Notional Chart For Lesson 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Formulae</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify</td>
<td>rites of passage</td>
<td>• ______ is an example of a rite of passage.</td>
<td>• present tense</td>
<td>• birth/adoption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• ______ is a rite of passage.</td>
<td>• compound subject</td>
<td>• circumcision</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• ______ and ______ are rites of passage.</td>
<td>• subject/verb agreement</td>
<td>• christening/ baptism</td>
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<td>• birthday party</td>
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<td>• first day of school</td>
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<td>• bar mitzvah/ bat mitzvah</td>
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<td>• getting a driver’s license</td>
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<td>• immigration</td>
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<td>• becoming a citizen</td>
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<td>• graduation</td>
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<td>• death/funeral</td>
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</table>
IV. MATERIALS: blackboard, chalk, student journals, pens, poster paper (including some paper cut into horizontal strips), markers, and teacher and student copies of the teacher-produced “Rites of Passage” handout. (See attached in Pocket 1.10)

Note: As standard practice, students will know they could get any handouts for that class at the previous day’s class, so they could preview them by themselves or with other people helping them in school or at home.

V. ACTIVITIES

1. (three minutes)

After telling students to take their usual seats in their “home groups” and to put their journals on their desks, the teacher points to the previously written blackboard summary for the new unit being started today. This summary will read as follows:

*Unit on Coming of Age/Initiation*

1. Rites of Passage
2. Quinceanera
3. Xhosa circumcision
4. Marine boot camp

After reading this unit title and its components, listed in the order in which this class will cover these components, the teacher briefly mentions that this will be a very interesting unit. He only briefly will explain what these components are about because, as he tells students, he wants to start now with Number 1, Rites of Passage. *(Throughout this unit, underlining indicates special emphasis on a word or phrase through teacher intonation.)*

The teacher once again says Rites of Passage, while pointing to it on the blackboard, but
this time he will slowly and clearly enunciate this phrase, with intonation indicating its importance. At the teacher’s prompt, students say this phrase in unison. The teacher reads this phrase again, slowly and clearly. On the blackboard he writes, “Today’s Objective: Identify different rites of passage.” The teacher says, “This is what we are going to do today. Identify different rites of passage. Marriage is an example of a rite of passage. A military boot camp is an example of a rite of passage. Marriage and boot camp are examples of rites of passage.”

The teacher tells students that soon he will ask them to identify other rites of passage, but that first it would be helpful to have a definition of rites of passage. The teacher asks students if any of them knows or wants to guess what rites of passage means. If any student gives correct information, the teacher writes this information on the blackboard, orally repeating this language after writing it and pausing several seconds after repeating this language.

If necessary to lead students to a correct answer, the teacher will use chalk to divide the three words on the blackboard and try to get an answer for passage and then for rites. The teacher might use hand gestures for passage to elicit an answer such as “going from one place to another.” He would say, “You go from one place to a different place. That’s like what some of you did. You made a passage, (1) from your old country to this country. You immigrated, and that was a very important change in your life. You went from one stage of life, in your old country, to a new stage of life, in this country. You went from one place to another. Immigration is a rite of passage.” For the meaning of rites, if the teacher cannot elicit a correct response, he could ask students to give a “thumbs up” or “thumbs down” sign to the question, “Do you think rites have something to do with ceremonies or customs?”

The teacher then would tell students, “Rites of passage are very important events in people’s lives, when a person moves into a different stage of his or her life.” The teacher writes
this definition on the blackboard and slowly says it again (3). The teacher asks a student (possibly an **Advanced ELL**) to read the definition; the teacher then asks another student (possibly an **Early Intermediate ELL**) to read it again. The teacher tells students to copy this definition sentence for **rites of passage** in their journals.

2. *(time: seven minutes)*

   The teacher tells students that in a minute or so, he will challenge them in their “home groups” to see how many examples of rites of passage they can think of and write down. *(In each three-student home group there are varied language levels. As much as possible, each **Pre-production ELL** and each **Early Production ELL** is placed in a group having a member sharing the same first language, so these **Pre-production ELLs** and **Early Production ELLs** can use their first language to negotiate meaning and more fully participate in as many class activities as possible. More advanced language learners and the mainstream students are actively encouraged to help their classmates.)* The teacher tells each student, “Take a few minutes to write down, in your journal, the names of examples of **rites of passage**.” While circulating and monitoring, the teacher tells any **Pre-production ELLs** and **Early Production ELLs** that they may use words or phrases from their first language or make a drawing to show what they mean.

   After telling students to stop writing in their journals, the teacher gives each group a horizontally shaped piece of poster paper and a marker. The teacher tells students to discuss their ideas and decide which ones are good examples of rites of passage. The teacher tells each student to use his or her group’s piece of poster paper to **each** write down the name of a rite of passage on the group’s poster paper, using the group’s marker. **Pre-production ELLs** and **Early Production ELLs** could be guided by other group members on how to write a word or phrase.
Each student would be expected to write at least one word or phrase, although students could write additional examples.

3. (time: eight minutes)

For each group to present its poster paper list of possible rites of passage, the teacher directs all class members to move closer to the bulletin board. He tells a member from each group to staple that group’s poster paper on the empty bulletin board. (Although students of various English levels should be asked to perform such tasks, the teacher should capitalize on such opportunities to get students with lower-level English skills involved in such real communicative tasks.) After each poster strip is in place on the bulletin board, the teacher asks various group members to read responses from that group’s strip. A Pre-production ELL unable to read an answer might only be asked to point to a specific answer (after which the teacher would read that answer). After various answers are mentioned, the teacher engages students at different language levels by asking them different types of questions on whether a specific answer is a rite of passage.

For example, the teacher might ask a Pre-production ELL, “Is birth a rite of passage?” After writing birth on the blackboard, the teacher could use mime, gestures, and baby sounds to communicate the meaning of this word. This student only would need to nod his head for an affirmative answer, shake his head for a negative answer, or give a “thumbs up” or “thumbs down” answer. For an Early Production ELL, the teacher might ask the same question but require an answer such as “Yes” or “No” or “I don’t know.” The teacher might ask a Beginning Intermediate ELL to briefly say why a certain answer is a rite of passage. The teacher might ask a higher-level ELL or a mainstream student to compare the relative importance of a
quinceanera and a regular birthday party.

For every answer the teacher agrees is a rite of passage, the teacher uses a marker to circle that answer on the cardboard strips previously placed on the bulletin board. After each correct answer is circled, students are told to use their journals to write that answer under the heading “Examples of Rites of Passage.”

4. (time: 10 minutes)

After complimenting students on the many fine examples they listed for rites of passage, the teacher gives each student a “Rites of Passage” handout (see attached, Pocket 1.1) consisting of pictures to help students develop their understanding of rites of passage. After distributing these handouts, the teacher tells students to look at the first page.

After reading the title (“Rites of Passage”), the teacher points to the photograph on pg. 1 of the handout. “Is that a photograph of a bridge?” the teacher could ask an Early Production ELL or a Pre-production ELL. To the class as a whole, the teacher could ask, “Why do you think I put a picture of a bridge on the front page of this handout about rites of passage?” If necessary, he would ask questions designed to eventually elicit an answer along the lines of, “You use a bridge to go from one place to another. In a rite of passage, you go from one stage to another stage.”

The teacher then asks a student (possibly an Early-production ELL) to read the rites of passage definition on pg. 1 of this handout. The teacher tells students to quickly look through the pages of this handout just to see that each page has at least one picture.

“In a few minutes,” the teacher will say, “You each will help each other in writing words to complete these sentences in the underlined spaces.” To model this assignment, the teacher tells
students to turn to pg. 2. The teacher asks students what they see in these pictures. On his pg. 2, the teacher writes words representing what he sees on this page. Then he completes the given sentence starter “These pictures represent” by writing birth (and making a period) in the underlined space left for the student answer. He holds up this page so students see how he did this assignment. The teacher says such an answer is fine but that students should write another sentence (or more) if they can. Or, as the teacher would model for students, they could write, “These pictures represent birth and pregnancy”; or, “These pictures represent birth and pregnancy. Birth is a rite of passage.”

The teacher now tells the students to start going through the handout with other members in their group, discussing the pictures and writing in the lines on each page. He tells Pre-production ELLs and Early Production ELLs they could do this work in English, with help from other group members, or do it in their first language. The teacher circulates in the room, helping students as necessary.

5. (time: 10 minutes)

When most or all groups complete this assignment, the teacher tells students to move their seats into a circle so the entire class can read their answers and discuss various rites of passage. Telling students when to turn to the next page, the teacher asks various students to share some of their sentences, as well as their thoughts and feelings about various pictures. To get all students as actively involved as possible, the teacher differentiates questions depending on the student’s English level.

For example, on pg. 3, a Beginning Intermediate ELL might be asked to read the answer he wrote under that picture in his or her handout. Higher-level language learners
(including mainstream students) might be asked: “What are the men doing to the baby?”; and, “Why are they doing this?”

Within the natural flow of such a discussion, the questions and comments could lead to the teacher’s asking a Pre-production ELL, “Would this hurt?”, expecting the student to answer with a nod or the shake of the head. The teacher could ask an Early Production ELL, “Do you think this circumcision would hurt a boy your age?” (with the student merely expected to say “yes”). When a Beginning Intermediate ELL seems familiar with a certain rite of passage such as the baby’s baptism (pg. 3) or the quinceanera (pg. 6), that student might be asked to briefly describe this a rite. Any student willing to share personal experience with a rite of passage should be encouraged to discuss it.

6. (time: two minutes)

Next, the teacher tells students to return to their desks and open their journals. He asks students to identify any rites of passage not previously listed on students’ poster strips. As students call out such examples, the teacher writes each correct response on the blackboard, under the heading “Examples of Rites of Passage,” repeating each answer (2). Students are told to add these examples to their journals.

7. (time: three minutes)

Preparing to end this lesson, the teacher tells students they can either give him their “Rites of Passage” handouts (so he can review them) or that they can take these handouts home.

The teacher tells students their homework due at the next class is to bring in a photo from their family, showing something from a rite of passage; bring in a photo or other illustration
from a newspaper, magazine, or the Internet, showing something from a rite of passage; or bring
in a drawing they make of a rite of passage, using a piece of poster paper they can take home. On
the blackboard, the teacher writes: *Homework: picture or drawing of a rite of passage.* The
teacher will tell students to write this assignment in their journal. The teacher asks students if
they have any questions about this assignment. Students are told that, with their individual
permission, these pictures and drawings will be posted on a "Rites of Passage" bulletin board to
be created in the classroom.

Students are told that for extra credit they can bring in any **physical** thing relating to any
experience they, their families, or their friends have had with a rite of passage. The teacher
mentions several examples of things that could be brought in (such as a student's baby picture or
a picture of a student's baby). He asks students to offer other suggestions.

Students are told that at the next class they will be encouraged to **show** other students the
pictures, drawings, or things they brought in and to informally tell other students about them, at
least in home groups. The teacher explains that after that, he will encourage students to share this
information in an informal whole-class discussion but that no student would be forced to stand
up and give a speech about it.

**VI. DAILY ASSESSMENT**

For each class this teacher gives each student a numerical assessment in the attendance/grade
book. Each student receives either a 2 (excellent work), a 1.5 (good work), a 1 (satisfactory), a .5
(poor), or a 0 (failing). These assessments are based on the extent to which each student meets
the stated objectives as specified in this lesson's content and language objectives for his or her
level (specific E.L.I. level or the mainstream level). In addition, the teacher keeps a daily
anecdotal record. On these pages he writes specific observations about a student’s content and language performance. The teacher takes special note, for example, of indications of emerging speech and lengthened discourse. This anecdotal record, along with more formal assessments done from time to time, helps the teacher make determinations about upgrading a student’s ELL level.

VII. RATIONALE FOR MODIFICATIONS

In my original Lesson 1 (see attached in Pocket 1.2) for this unit – a lesson developed for a mainstream English class, without modifications for ELLs – *rites of passage* was covered in the first few minutes. Through FLA 518, however, I realized that *rites of passage*, in itself, offered me a fantastic vehicle to capitalize on students’ diverse cultures and background knowledge. Due to the universal nature of this concept, I knew I could develop two lessons (*my modified Lessons 1 and 2*) that would meaningfully engage students of varying English levels, in groups and whole-class activities, providing them with comprehensible input and opportunities for meaningful output. Regardless of a language learner’s level, all students have experiences with such rites, as do their families and other community members. Students can tap these resources.

Regarding specific modifications for ELLs in Lesson 1, I basically changed my normal way of mainstream teaching, to consciously seek to get maximum student involvement and interaction. To make input comprehensible, I used simple language, intonation, repetition of key concepts and words, pauses, and visuals (the blackboard, the poster paper work, and especially the “Rites of Passage” handout). Students could negotiate meaning and communicate with each other in home groups where they could learn, practice their new language, get native-language
support, and use their first language. This also empowered students to participate more in whole-class activities. My major modification was consciously planning to ask students questions they COULD answer. It sounds so simple, but for a mainstream teacher such as myself it is revolutionary.
Rites of Passage are very important events in people's lives, when a person moves into a different stage of his or her life.
These pictures represent
This picture shows

This photograph represents

This illustration represents
The drawing on the top represents ________________

_____________________

_____________________

_____________________

The drawing on the bottom represents ________________

_____________________

_____________________

_____________________
The photograph on top represents

This is a photo of ________________
This card on the right represents

The illustration on the right represents

The picture on the right bottom is of
The photographs on this page are

of ____________________________

________________________________

________________________________

________________________________

8
I would guess that this picture is an illustration of ____________________
These pictures are illustrations of
These pictures represent
The pictures on this page are of
Lesson 2
LESSON 2 in Unit on “Coming of Age/Initiation: A Rite of Passage”

I. CONTENT OBJECTIVES

1. Verbally explain a self-produced picture or illustration of a rite of passage

   - Advanced ELLs, Advanced Intermediate ELLs, and mainstream students orally will give explanations equivalent to two short paragraphs of their pictures or illustrations

   - Beginning Intermediate ELLs will give explanations equivalent to a short paragraph

   - Early Production ELLs will use one-word, two-word, or short-phrase discourse in giving a brief explanation in English, and may use their first language to elaborate

   - Pre-production ELLs will nod or gesture in response to questions about their illustrations, and may use their first language to elaborate if a translator is available

2. Interview a person about a rite of passage and take notes

   - all students will do this but Pre-production ELLs and Early Production ELLs will take notes in their first language

3. Write a summary of that interview

   - Mainstream students, Advanced ELLs, and Advanced Intermediate ELLs will write an essay of at least three paragraphs

   - Beginning Intermediate ELLs will write a paragraph

   - Early Production ELLs will use English words to complete a paragraph-length cloze exercise in English and use their first language to write sentences

   - Pre-production ELLs will use their first language

II. LANGUAGE OBJECTIVES: same as Content Objectives
### III. Functional/Notional Chart For Lesson 2

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Formulae</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ask questions</td>
<td>interview</td>
<td>• What can you tell me about _______?</td>
<td>• interrogatives</td>
<td>• when I was born</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• What is your name?</td>
<td></td>
<td>• your first day at school</td>
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<td>• What happened?</td>
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<td>• your graduation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• What was interesting about it?</td>
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<td>• my christening/baptism</td>
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<td>• Where did it/happen?</td>
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<td>• my first birthday party</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Why was that important?</td>
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<td>• your bar mitzvah/bat mitzvah</td>
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<td>• Why?</td>
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<td>• your quinceanera</td>
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<td>• How did you do that?</td>
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<td>• your first prom</td>
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<td>• How?</td>
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<td>• boot camp</td>
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<td>• Tell me more.</td>
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<td>• when you got married</td>
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<td>• Please explain</td>
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<td>• when you immigrated to the U.S./when you moved from Puerto Rico to the mainland</td>
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<td>• when you became a citizen</td>
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<td>• what happens when a person dies in your culture</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
IV. MATERIALS: blackboard, chalk, bulletin board, stapler, paper, journals, pens, teacher and student copies of the following: “Glossary of Words Relating to Rites of Passage” (see attached, Pocket 2.1), “Interview Questions” (see attached, Pocket 2.2), and “Interview Assignment” (differentiated copies of assignments based on student’s language level – see attached, Pocket 2.3).

V. ACTIVITIES

1. (one minute)

   The teacher points to the Unit Schedule on the blackboard and reviews yesterday’s lesson by pointing to the definition of rites of passage on the blackboard (the same definition written on blackboard in Lesson 1). He reads that definition. Under that definition is written the heading “Examples” and beneath that: birth, baptism, christening, first day of school, first communion, bar mitzvah, bat mitzvah, first prom, quinceanera, boot camp, getting married, having a baby, adoption, immigration, and becoming a citizen. The teacher reads these examples.

2. (three minutes)

   Next, the teacher gives students a glossary (see attached, Pocket 2.1) including entries such as the ones listed on the blackboard for the previous activity, plus initiation and rites of passage. The teacher says the words and definitions, asking students to follow along in their glossaries. In elaborating on coming of age, the teacher briefly explains that unlike the specific examples of rites of passage listed on the blackboard, coming of age is a general category that includes, for example, a quinceanera and an adult circumcision ritual. Pointing to the unit schedule on the blackboard, the teacher tells students that in the next class they will read about a quinceanera and that two classes
later they will read about a circumcision rite of passage. In discussing initiation, the teacher observes that in a quinceanera, the girl is initiated into womanhood, just as in an adult circumcision ritual a boy is initiated into manhood. reminds students. Another example of initiation, adds the teacher, is the initiation of recruits into the U.S. Marine Corps, through boot camp. Pointing again to the unit schedule, the teacher comments that students will be reading about that soon too.

3. (four minutes)

Students are told to pair off with their “partners” and share information about the picture of a rite of passage (or their drawing of a rite of passage) which they each brought to class for the homework assigned in Lesson 1. Furthermore; if they brought in a physical thing from a rite of passage (the extra-credit assignment given in Lesson 1), they would share information about this thing. (In previously assigning these “standing” partners previously, the teacher’s main priority was to match Early-Production ELLs and Pre-Production ELLs with more proficient English speakers sharing the same first language. The next priority was to match Beginning Intermediate ELLs with higher-level English speakers.) Students discuss what they brought to class, as the teacher walks around the room, giving students any help they might need.

4. (14 minutes)

Returning to the whole-class format, the teacher and students move their seats into a circular arrangement. The teacher encourages students to volunteer to share their picture, drawing, and/or physical thing with the rest of the class. Student volunteers could remain seated while explaining what they brought in. The teacher serves as a moderator, asking questions to get students to elaborate
and get more students involved in what should evolve into an this “instructional conversation.” (In an instructional conversation, the teacher encourages students to keep the talk going in a natural and informal way, while the teacher also keeps the talk from drifting off the topic. The teacher asks genuine questions, in the sense that he doesn’t already know the answer. Students are encouraged to express their feelings and opinions.) If a translator is available, a Pre-Production ELL or an Early Production ELL could contribute more to the discussion by using his or her first language. The teacher could ask a Beginning Intermediate ELL to describe what he or she brought to class. The teacher could ask Higher-level ELLs and mainstream students to compare and contrast the importance of two different rites of passage being discussed. At this point the teacher collects pictures and drawings brought in by students, telling students that with their individual permission he later will post them on the new “Rites of Passage” bulletin board. Any students willing to share personal photos are offered the opportunity of letting the teacher Xerox the photos after class so they can be returned to students.

5. (nine minutes)

The teacher explains that for their next homework assignment, due on the first school day after the weekend, each student will interview a person about a rite of passage from that person’s culture (or from American culture). The teacher tells students this assignment can be turned in at any time after today but will be due Monday. The teacher tells students each of them will take notes during this interview and write about what the person says about this rite of passage.

The teacher tells students that to help them do a good job interviewing, he first wants to make sure they know what type of questions to ask. The teacher asks students to each meet with his or her partner to quickly think of examples of questions they could ask. The teacher tells students to work together for a few minutes to write down their ideas for questions. The teacher circulates, helping
students as they need help.

Returning to the blackboard, the teacher asks each pair to suggest questions that could be asked. He writes all reasonable and relevant questions on the blackboard, repeating these questions as he writes them. After each group has had the opportunity to share ideas for good questions, the teacher tells them that these were the type of questions he asked people when he was a newspaper reporter. Saying that most good questions start with the letter \( W \) (for \textit{who}, \textit{what}, \textit{where}, \textit{when}, and \textit{why}) or the letter \( H \) (\textit{how}), he underlines any of the student-produced questions starting with any of these six words.

The teacher tells students that when he was in college, learning to be a reporter, he was taught about the “5 \( W \)’s and Sometimes \( H \)” formula. He tells students he used this formula to plan which questions to ask people in interviews. The teacher now gives students the “Interview Questions” handout (\textit{see attached, Pocket 2.2}), which includes this formula. After the teacher reads the heading (“Interview Questions”) and sub-heading (“Using the 5 \( W \)’s and Sometimes \( H \) Formula”), he asks various students to read example questions under each of the six headings. The teacher tells students to think about asking such questions when they interview a person about a rite of passage for this new assignment.

6. (one minute)

Now the teacher gives each student a copy of his or her “Interview Assignment” (\textit{these assignments are differentiated by four English levels – see attached, Pocket 2.3}). While handing out these copies, the teacher repeats that each student will interview a person, \textit{take notes}, and complete a writing assignment about what the person interviewed said. (\textit{The teacher won’t emphasize that students are being given different ways to do this assignment. He doesn’t want to confuse students,}}
nor encourage bickering over any perceived unfairness. But students would be familiar with this practice in this classroom. Later, when students are working in pairs for the next activity, the teacher quietly checks with students to make sure they understand their assignment.

7. (10 minutes)

The teacher gives each student a piece of paper. He tells students they now will each meet with his or her partner to practice for the homework interview assignment. The teacher tells students they will practice asking questions and taking notes. The teacher says nothing said now will be submitted to the teacher or shared outside of these partner groups, so students should be honest and not worry about having anyone else hear this. Each student will ask his or her partner questions about a rite of passage in his or her culture (or American culture) that the partner experienced himself or herself, or that the partner otherwise knows about. The teacher tells students to each try to ask a question from each of the six categories listed in the “Interview Questions” handout (which he points to). The teacher explains that after asking each question, the student asking the questions should write down notes on what the other student says. The teacher writes on the blackboard:

1. Ask your partner questions about a rite of passage.

2. Take notes.

The teacher now circulates in the room, giving students any help they might need. Students lacking enough English to do this work will be told they could use their first language.

8. (one minute)

The teacher tells students that today’s class is almost over but that students now can further practice their interviewing skills through the homework assignment. The teacher tells students they
can interview anybody and to remember to take notes.

The teacher explains that in the next class students will learn more about *coming of age* and read about a Latina’s *quinceanera*. The teacher asks students if any of them has a video of a *quinceanera*, or any pictures or physical things from one. If so, the teacher encourages them to bring it in the next class to share with students. Such students would get extra credit, says the teacher.

VI. DAILY ASSESSMENT: Same process as in Lesson 1 (pg. 1.11).

VII. RATIONALE FOR MODIFICATIONS

My modified Lesson 2 was a logical follow-up to my modified Lesson 1. Both modified lessons originated from my original Lesson 1 (see attached, Pocket 1.2), when I explained *rites of passage*. In terms of how this lesson was planned differently than a similar non-modified lesson would have been in my mainstream classroom, I identify the major distinctions as follows: pairing students and allowing use of their first language; differentiating objectives and assignments for students on various English levels; and using simpler language in “teacher talk” and in teacher-prepared handouts. Although such strategies were included to make this lesson more accessible to ELLs, I now realize these changes forced me to make the lesson more comprehensible for all students. I did not take it for granted that students knew certain things and certain language; that often can be a teacher’s mistake, especially if the teacher has at-risk students. My changes now make this lesson not only *possible* for ELLs, but more *understandable* for mainstream students.

Regarding the simplification of language, when I was a newspaper reporter I was taught that to clearly communicate your story to the reader, a reporter should “Keep it simple.” Writing essentially is communication; and stripped away of all its other attributes, so is education.
Glossary of Words Relating to Rites of Passage

1. **ADOPTION**: (noun) becoming a parent for a child given up by a different parent

2. **BAPTISM**: (noun) ceremony when a person becomes a member of a Christian religion

3. **BAR MITZVAH**: (noun) ceremony when a male Jew becomes responsible member in religion of Judaism

4. **BAT MITZVAH**: (noun) ceremony when a female Jew becomes responsible member in religion of Judaism

5. **BOOT CAMP**: (noun) training camp for people who join the Marines, or the Army, or the Navy, etc.

6. **CHRISTENING**: (noun) ceremony when a baby is made a member of a religious group; this word also means a ceremony when a person is given his or her name

7. **CIRCUMCISION**: (noun) the cutting off of the foreskin of a male’s penis; in the religion of Judaism, circumcision happens soon after the baby is born; in some other cultures, circumcision is part of a ceremony at which a boy becomes a man

8. **COMING OF AGE**: (noun phrase) a rite of passage in which a girl becomes a woman or a boy becomes a man

9. **FIRST COMMUNION**: in the Christian religion, the first time when a boy or girl takes a communion wafer

10. **FUNERAL**: (noun) a ceremony for a person who has died

11. **IMMIGRATED**: (past tense of verb **IMMIGRATE**) moved to a new country; a person moving to a new country is an IMMIGRANT; the noun for this move is IMMIGRANT

12. **INITIATION**: (noun) a rite of passage when a person becomes a member of a group, such as a military group, a gang, etc.

13. **PREGNANCY**: (noun) the time when a woman has an unborn baby in her body

14. **QUINCEANERA**: (noun) the ceremony, at age 15 or 16, when an Hispanic girl becomes a woman; this is why a quinceanera is a “coming of age” rite of passage

15. **RITES OF PASSAGE**: important events in people’s lives, when there is an important change in the person’s life, such as birth, coming of age, initiation, marriage, retirement, death

16. **TRANSITION**: a time of change, between one thing and another
Interview Questions
Using the 5 W’s and Sometimes H Formula

1. Who?
   * Who are you?
   * Who did you go with?
   * Who did you marry?
   * Who did that?

2. What?
   * What is your name?
   * What happened?
   * What was interesting about it?

3. Where?
   * Where were you born?
   * Where were you living then?
   * Where did it happen?
   * Where?

4. When?
   * When did it happen?
   * When did that happen?
   * When did you live there?
   * When did you feel that you became a man/woman?
   * When?

5. Why?
   * Why did you do that?
   * Why did they do that to you?
   * Why was that important?
   * Why did you have a good time?
   * Why was it interesting?
   * Why was it exciting?

6. How?
   * How did that happen?
   * How did you do that?
   * How did they do that?
INTERVIEW ASSIGNMENT (for mainstream, Advanced ELLs, and Advanced ELLs):

1. **Interview** a person about a rite of passage from his or her culture (or American culture).
   Write down the person’s name, the name of the place where this person was born, and the rite of passage this person discusses. Ask the person to describe this rite of passage and possibly his or her experience with it. Also ask this person why he or she thinks this rite of passage is important in his or her culture. Take lots of notes on what this person tells you about this particular rite of passage.

2. After your interview, **write an essay** of at least three paragraphs, in which you identify this person and his or her relationship to you; describe the rite of passage he or she told you about; and say why this person thinks it is so important in his or her culture.
INTERVIEW ASSIGNMENT (for Beginning Intermediate ELLs):

1. **Interview** a person about a rite of passage from his or her culture (or American culture).

Write down the person's name, the name of the place where this person was born, and the rite of passage this person talks about. Ask the person to tell you about this rite of passage and possibly his or her experience with it. Then ask this person to tell you why he or she thinks this rite of passage is so important in his or her culture. **Take lots of notes** on what this person tells you about this particular rite of passage. Ask any questions that will get you more information about this rite of passage and why it is important.

2. After your interview, **write a paragraph**. In this paragraph, give the name of this person, say where this person was born, and explain how you know this person. Describe the rite of passage that this person told you about. Say why this rite of passage is so important in the culture.
INTERVIEW ASSIGNMENT (for Early Production ELLs)

1. Ask a relative or other person from your culture, who speaks your first language, to tell you about a rite of passage from your culture. Tell the person to use your first language. Use your first language to write down notes. Write down the person’s name. Then write down the name of the place where the person was born. Next, write down the name of the rite of passage this person is telling you about. Write down what this person tells you about this rite of passage.

2. Use your first language to write some sentences about what this person told you.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

3. Fill in the blanks of the following paragraph, using English.

The name of the person I asked questions to was ___________________. The day I interviewed this person was ___________________. This person was born in ___________________. The place where I did this interview was at (name of country or place) ___________________. The rite or passage this person told me about was (where you talked with person) ___________________. (name of rite of passage talked about)
INTERVIEW ASSIGNMENT (for Pre-production ELLs)

1. **Talk with a person who speaks your first language.** Using this first language, ask this person to tell you about a rite of passage.

2. **Use your first language to take notes** on what this person tells you.

3. **Use your first language to write** who you spoke with and what this person told you.
Lesson 3
LESSON 3 in Unit on “Coming of Age/Initiation: A Rite of Passage”

I. CONTENT OBJECTIVES

1. Define coming of age.

2. Use context clues to determine the meaning of words and phrases in a text.
   - Pre-Production ELLs and Early Production ELLs will meet this objective by completing a cloze exercise (with options listed) in a differentiated reading guide
   - Higher-level ELLs and mainstream students will explain the meaning of these words and phrases by writing answers in their differentiated reading guides

3. Write written responses to a text
   - Pre-Production ELLs and Early Production ELLs will complete a cloze exercise (with options listed) in a differentiated reading guide
   - Beginning Intermediate ELLs will write sentence-length answers (and shorter ones) to questions in a differentiated reading guide
   - Higher-level students will write responses to questions in a differentiated reading guide but several questions will require inferences and/or paragraph-length answers

II. LANGUAGE OBJECTIVES

Same as Content Objectives listed above
### III. Functional/Notional Chart For Lesson 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Formulae</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explain why</td>
<td>A <em>quinceanera</em> is a rite of passage</td>
<td>• A <em>quinceanera</em> is a rite of passage because</td>
<td>• Declarative sentence • Complex sentence</td>
<td>• it is when a girl becomes a woman/adult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• it marks an important change in the life of a girl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain why</td>
<td>A <em>quinceanera</em> is important</td>
<td>• A <em>quinceanera</em> is important because</td>
<td>• Declarative sentence • Complex sentence</td>
<td>• it is when a girl becomes a woman/adult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• it marks an important change in the life of a girl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• it is a Hispanic tradition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IV. MATERIALS: blackboard, chalk, bulletin board, pens, and VCR; and teacher and student copies of the following teacher-generated handouts: “Rites of Passage Cycle” (see attached in Pocket 3.1); “Glossary of Words Relating to Rites of Passage” (see attached in Pocket 3.2); differentiated copies of the newspaper article from the Republican-American issue of Dec. 30, 2002, headlined “Coming of Age, Traditional Hispanic Ceremony Marks Entry Into Womanhood for 16-Year-Old” (see attached in Pocket 3.3); and differentiated copies of the “Reading Guide” (see attached in Pocket 3.4).

V. ACTIVITIES

1. (seven minutes)

Pointing to the unit schedule on the blackboard, the teacher points out that after spending two days on rites of passage, today the class will move on to the second unit topic (a quinceanera). But first the teacher briefly reviews the definitions of “Rites of Passage” and “Coming of Age,” still on the blackboard from previous classes. The teacher then gestures to the “Rites of Passage” bulletin board where he previously posted pictures the students brought in at the previous class. Complimenting students, the teacher briefly points to various pictures and mentions the rites of passage they depict.

Next, the teacher gives all students illustrated copies of the “Rites of Passage Cycle” (see attached in Pocket 3.1). The teacher tells students the cycle of life, or circle of life, goes from birth, to coming of age, to initiation, to wedding, to death. (While making this statement he moves his right hand in a circle.) The teacher emphasizes that all people do not go through every rite of passage such as initiations and weddings. But generally, he says, this the universal pattern of major rites of passage throughout the world.
Pointing to *initiation* on his copy of the cycle, the teacher explains that *initiation* basically means “a beginning.” He explains that *initiation* is a *general* term that includes various types of initiation. He points out that going to a military boot camp (as seen in the handout photo representing “Initiation”) is an example of an initiation rite of passage, as is an initiation for a fraternity (which he defines as “a club for males”) or for a sorority (“a club for females”). Asking students for another example of an initiation probably would lead to *gang initiation*, another correct answer.

Similarly, pointing to the symbol (on the handout) of graduation, representing *coming of age* on the cycle, the teacher emphasizes that *coming of age* also is a *general* term that includes various ways in which a boy becomes a man, or a girl becomes a woman. “Today, the teacher will state, “we soon will focus the *coming of age* rite of passage in which a girl becomes a woman.”

The teacher now tells students to meet in their home groups to discuss how they would answer the following two questions, which he will write on the blackboard:

1. *When does a girl become a woman?*
2. *When does a boy becomes a man?*

The teacher now circulates in the room, helping students and telling them they can use their first language to discuss these questions with other group members and to write down their thoughts. After a few minutes, the teacher tells the students to each use his or her journal to write his or her *opinion* on these two questions (in English or in the first language). A minute later, the teacher asks students to stop writing so they can share their ideas.

Standing at the blackboard, the teacher asks students for their answers to the first questions. Writing the heading “Girls to Women” on the blackboard, he writes various student
responses and verbally repeats these responses. After doing this for the Question 1, he does it for Question 2. These questions should lead to an interesting discussion, which the teacher might allow to continue a while if it engages students as expected.

Concluding this discussion, the teacher says, “Two days from now, we will talk more about how boys become men. We will read Nelson Mandela’s description of his circumcision “coming of age” rite of passage in Africa when he was 16. But first, today, we are going to read an article about a Waterbury girl’s quinceanera, the rite of passage when, in her Hispanic culture, she went from being a girl to being a woman.”

The teacher now writes today’s objective on the board. It reads, “Explain why a quinceanera is an important coming of age rite of passage.”

The teacher asks students to explain what they know about quinceaneras. Questioning students, the teacher seeks to determine if any student has participated in one. If so, he will try to get students to share this experience. Also, if any student brought in a video of a quinceanera, or memorabilia from one (as the teacher suggested in the previous class), the student could present the video (at least part of it) or the memorabilia now. (Naturally, that would affect time planning.)

2. (seven minutes)

The teacher gives students a glossary to help them understand words in the article they will read, and to also help them learn three “newspaper words” (headline, byline, and cutline) he wants to teach them.

The teacher reviews the glossary words with the students. He writes certain of these words on the board, coaching students on using the word part strategy to figure out the meaning
of such words.

For example, the teacher draws a line after the d in medieval, asking students what med often means as a word part. If no student says “middle,” the teacher writes median and Mediterranean. Asking “Where is the median on a highway?” probably would elicit the answer of “middle.” For Mediterranean, the teacher explains that terra means “earth.” He explains that when the Mediterranean Sea got its name in ancient times, it was in the middle what the people there thought of as “Earth.”

For symbolizes, the teacher underlines symbol and asks students what that means. He gets them to recognize symbolizes as the verb for the noun symbol. The teacher also will tell students that even within symbol, the sym is a word part meaning “same.” The teacher writes symbiosis on the board – which some students would recognize from science classes – and he notes that sym means “same,” and bio means “life.” He says this makes sense in a word meaning that two different life forms support the lives of each other in a symbiotic relationship. The teacher would write symbiotic on the blackboard and say it again. The teacher also observe that although sym is spelled with a y, it’s basically the same word part as sim, more familiar to students through words such as similar, simile, and simulcast.

3. (20 minutes)

Following the glossary review, the teacher gives each student a copy of the newspaper article text (see attached in Pocket 3.3). The teacher asks students to identify the headline and the byline on the first page, and the cutline on the second page. The teacher tells students to sit near their class partners and read this article, after which they each will take a reading guide (see attached in Pocket 3.4) from the teacher’s desk and work on it. During this time the teacher
moves around the room, giving students any help they need. *(Some students would be expected to quietly read this article to themselves and complete the reading guide quietly, while other students quietly could talk to each other about this reading and about the reading guide. Lower-level ELLs might use their first language.)*

Regarding the newspaper article handout, it consists of text and photos that the teacher cut from a newspaper and arranged differently on the pages he copied for students. But each student will have the same text and photographs. However, copies for the Pre-production ELLs, Early Production ELLs, and Beginning Intermediate ELLs also will include teacher-added summary comments adjacent to the newspaper text, highlighting main points.

The reading guide is differentiated into three versions: one for Preproduction ELLs and Early Production ELLs; one for Beginning Intermediate ELLs; and the other for the higher-level ELLs and mainstream students. Each guide contains the same number of questions; and on each of these three versions, each numbered question corresponds to the same numbered question on the other two guides in that each numbered question asks about the same word or topic. For lower-level ELLs, however, the questions are in fill-in-the-blank format (with options for the blanks listed), as compared to the short-answer questions asked of the higher-level English students. For the most part, the reading guides for the Beginning Intermediate ELLs and for the higher-level English students, respectively, are not very different. But there are variations for several questions, in which the higher-level students are asked to make an inferences and/or to write a paragraph instead of a sentence.

4. *(eight minutes)*

When the teacher deems it a good time to switch to a whole-class review of the reading
guides, this will be done. For this discussion, the teacher and students sit in a circle. The teacher starts with the first question and, if time permits, proceed through the rest of them. Since each student would have written an answer to the same topic for each numbered question, the teacher could call on various students to answer to the same numbered questions. While reviewing the vocabulary in context section (Questions 1-6), the teacher not only questions students about their answers but also asks students to explain how they reached this answer. This would help students develop skills for determining the meaning of words through context clues. For the last question on the reading guide, the teacher should allow answers to develop into instructional conversations, in which students could feel free to elaborate on their feelings and opinions.

5. (one minute)

Preparing to end the class, the teacher asks students to tell him what coming of age means. After they verbally give answers, he asks them to tell him examples of coming of age, which they also will do verbally.

The teacher collects students’ reading guides so he can review them to check on students’ progress. As he deems appropriate, he keeps (or makes copies of) any guides that might help him in his ongoing assessment of students, or he returns them to students the following day. Another option is to post student guides on the “Rites of Passage” bulletin board the next day (if student permission is obtained).

Complimenting students on their work on the reading guide, the teacher tells students, “Now that we’ve read about a coming of age ceremony marking the rite of passage of a girl who becomes a woman, tomorrow we will read about a coming of age ceremony marking the rite of passage of a boy who becomes a man.”
VI. DAILY ASSESSMENT

The same daily assessment as that used in Lesson 1 (pg. 11).

VII. RATIONALE FOR MODIFICATIONS

My modified Lesson 3 is a modification of my original “Lesson 4” (see attached in Pocket 3.5), which basically consisted of a brief discussion of *quinceanera*, a review of key vocabulary terms, a circular read-aloud of this article, and a general discussion of the article. For the original lesson, I copied the newspaper article in a “text-heavy” way (filling most of each page with text and not including all the photos from the article), and making copies on the front and back of each page. Frankly, my main reason for doing this was to fit as much on each page as possible so the handout would consist of fewer pages, making it easier for me to copy, collate, and staple. Enlightened while taking FLA 518, I modified these handouts by: leaving space on each page of the newspaper article handout for explanatory text for **Pre-production ELLs**, **Early Production ELLs**, and **Beginning Intermediate ELLs**; including all the photos from the article; by positioning photos next to (or near) text that they illustrate; highlighting key words from the glossary in the article handouts; and numbering each paragraph of the article to make it easier to reference certain paragraphs during the reading activities. Other modifications included the concept map of the “Rites of Passage Cycle”; the glossary of key words; the differentiated reading guides; and the pairing of students for the reading-related activities. Although I consciously made such modifications to make this reading more comprehensible to ELLs, these changes would make the reading more comprehensible to all the students. As for the topic of this class and its capitalization on the predominant first-language culture (Spanish) in my class, I
wouldn't call it a modification because, as a teacher of at-risk students, I generally do select reading materials reflecting students' cultures.
Rites of Passage Cycle

Birth

Death

Rites of Passage

Marriage

Invitation

Coming of Age
Glossary for Quinceanera Article

1. **ABSTAIN**: (verb) to not do something (such as not vote, not have sex,)

2. **ANCIENT**: adjective referring to a very long time ago, such as a few thousands of years ago

3. **BYLINE**: (noun) in an article, the line above the story, saying who wrote the article

4. **CUTLINE**: (noun) the words near a picture, saying what the picture shows; caption

5. **ELABORATE**: as adjective, this means a lot of work went into doing something; as verb, it means to give more information about something

6. **ENCHANTING**: as adjective, it means charming

7. **GLIDES**: (verb, third person singular of GLIDE), to move smoothly

8. **HEADLINE**: (noun) the title of an article

9. **HISPANIC**: (adjective) Spanish; Latino (for males) and Latina (for females)

10. **MASSIVE**: (adjective) a lot of something

11. **MEDIEVAL**: adjective referring to Middle Ages (approximately from the year 500 to 1450

12. **ORIGINS**: (plural noun of ORIGIN) the beginnings of something

13. **ORNATE**: (adjective) heavily decorated, involving many details

14. **QUINCEANERA**: (Spanish noun) traditionally, 15th birthday “coming of age” rite of passage for a Latina, marking her passage from girl to woman

15. **RITUAL**: (noun) a system of rites, or things, often done the same way in a ceremony

16. **SANCTUARY**: (noun) a holy place such as a church or temple

17. **SYMBOLIZES**: (verb, third person singular of SYMBOLIZE), to represent something else

18. **TANTALIZING**: adjective referring to teasing a person by making that person think of something that he or she cannot get

19. **TRADITIONAL**: (adjective) the way something, or some things, normally are done; TRADITIONALLY is an adverb meaning the same thing; TRADITIONS (the plural noun of TRADITION), means things, or customs, that have been done in a certain way for a long time
COMING OF AGE

Traditional Hispanic ceremony marks entry into womanhood for 16-year-old

By Amy Montemerino
© 2002 Republican-American

12-30-03

WATERBURY — Yesse Reveron felt like a little girl playing dressup Saturday, but in the eyes of her family and church she became a woman.

Yesse will remain at home with her parents and has big plans for college, but eight hours of ceremony and celebration marked her 16th birthday and entrance into adulthood.

For Yesse, the daylong coming-of-age ritual had religious and social significance. Instead of cake and presents, Yesse modeled her medieval-theme birthday after a traditional Latin American quinceañeras, a coming-of-age ceremony for young Hispanic girls.

The quinceañeras ceremony comes from ancient Mexican society, its origins can be traced back to the Aztec Indians. The celebration traditionally marks a girl's 16th birthday. But some families, like the Reverons, choose to wait a year and blend quinceañeras with a more Americanized celebration — a sweet 16 birthday party.

"I'm a modern girl, but I've always been interested in the past," Yesse said.

Quinceañeras are not ordinary birthday parties. They are ornate, lengthy celebrations that can cost thousands of dollars. They are similar to weddings, but instead of celebrating a marriage, they mark a girl's passage into womanhood. Yesse Reveron, a sophomore at Wilby High School, isn't thinking about marriage. She wants to get a law degree. But she is becoming a woman, said Anamin Reveron, Yesse's mother.

"She's growing up," said Anamin, wiping away tears. "She's ready to be on her own now."
For Yesse Reveron and her mother, Anamin, the day of quinceañeras was emotional, especially after getting Yesse into her elaborate gown.
St. Cecilia's is a tiny Catholic church on Baldwin Street, tucked between a deli and a three-family home. It has big meaning to Yesse, who goes every Sunday with her family. She was baptized and received her first communion inside St. Cecilia's sanctuary.

Saturday, she sits on a wooden pew alone, across from her family. Her hair, tied in a series of elaborate braids, gathers in the hood of her cape.

In the middle of the Spanish Mass, Yesse receives a special blessing from the Rev. Kevin Gray.

"Yesse, you know that Jesus is with you today," Gray said. He kisses her forehead.

During the Mass, Yesse places a dozen pink roses in front of the altar. The flowers, her offering to God, represent life.

The highlight of the ceremony comes when Yesse's grandmothers — Cecilia Colon and Francis Reveron — place a gold tiara, the "Crown of Life," on Yesse's head and kiss her cheeks. The crown symbolizes Yesse's triumph over childhood and her promise to abstain from sex until marriage.

The Mass ends a few minutes later. Yesse strides out of the church, with a confident smile.

**Sixteen candles**

The banner inside the Knights of Columbus Hall on Dube Lane beckons visitors to 17th century Spain. Inside, the hall is decorated like a high school prom. There are blue and silver cardboard castles and bunches of color-coordinated balloons. Trays of chicken legs and meatballs steam in a corner, across from a massive, three-tier cake made with pineapple, guava and strawberries. The top tier is shaped like a castle, with ice cream cone towers.

"I want her to remember this day as something precious," Anamin said. "This is my celebration to her. We've had 16 wonderful years."

At 5 p.m., the hall is packed. Most guests are wearing silver and gold crowns. Yesse waits in a back room, ready to make her grand appearance. She is practicing ballet steps with her knights.

A half-hour later, they file in. Yesse walks under the knights' swords and starts to dance. The room is silent as she glides across the floor. This is her time.

"This is the most anticipated birthday," said Samuel Bowens, who is a knight. "Quinceañera is one of the most important traditions in a young Latina's life."

After her dance, Yesse and her father complete another tradition — the changing of the shoes. Yesse has waited for this moment all day. Earlier Saturday morning, she slipped a pair of crystal toeless heels into a silk bag.
Her father slips off her flat slippers and gently eases her foot into the heel. This tradition marks the beginnings of Yesse's life as a woman.

By changing his daughter's shoes, Thomas Reveron acknowledges his daughter's passage into adulthood. It brought tears to his eyes.

"The first time I held you in my arms you were so tiny," Reveron said, in a strained voice. "Now, I must let you go and walk on your own."

"I can't believe you're worried about that," Yesse replies, laughing.
COMING OF AGE

Traditional Hispanic ceremony marks entry into womanhood for 16-year-old

Yesse Reveron, 16, became a woman Saturday.

Quinceañeras are coming-of-age ceremonies for Hispanic girls.

Quinceañeras are at age 15, but Yesse "bledded" it with American "sweet 16" birthday party.

Yesse Reveron, 16, became a woman Saturday.

Quinceañeras are expensive, fancy, and lengthy celebrations.

Yesse danced with her father at this party.

She's growing up," said Anamín, wiping away tears. "She's ready to be on her own now."
St. Cecilia's is a tiny Catholic church on Baldwin Street, tucked between a deli and a three-family home. It has big meaning to Yesse, who goes every Sunday with her family. She was baptized and received her first communion inside St. Cecilia's sanctuary.

Saturday, she sits on a wooden pew alone, across from her family. Her hair, tied in a series of elaborate braids, gathers in the hood of her cape.

In the middle of the Spanish Mass, Yesse receives a special blessing from the Rev. Kevin Gray.

"Yesse, you know that Jesus is with you today," Gray said. He kisses her forehead.

During the Mass, Yesse places a dozen pink roses in front of the altar. The flowers, her offering to God, represent life.

The highlight of the ceremony comes when Yesse's grandmothers - Cecilia Colon and Francis Beveron - place a gold diad - the "Crown of Life" - on Yesse's head and kiss her cheeks. The crown symbolizes Yesse's triumph over childhood and her promise to abstain from sex until marriage.

The Mass ends a few minutes later. Yesse strides out of the church, with a confident smile.

Sixteen candles

The banner inside the Knights of Columbus Hall on Dunne Lane beckons visitors to 11th century Spain. Inside, the hall is decorated like a high school prom. There are blue and silver cardboard castles and bunches of color-coordinated balloons. Trays of chicken legs and meatballs steam in a corner, across from a massive, three-tier cake made with pineapple, guava and strawberries. The top tier is shaped like a castle, with ice cream cone towers.

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After her dance, Yesse and her father complete another tradition - the changing of the shoes. Yesse has waited for this moment all day. Earlier Saturday morning, she slipped a pair of crystal toeless heels into a silk bag.

Yesse dancing by herself. Next to her is one of her nine Knights.
Lesson 4
LESSON 4 in Unit on “Coming of Age/Initiation: A Rite of Passage”

I. CONTENT OBJECTIVE

1. Demonstrate understanding of the format for writing a “thank you” letter by putting the date, greeting, body, and closing in the correct “friendly letter” format.

   – Pre-production ELLs and Early Production ELLs will meet this objective by completing a cloze-type “thank you” letter (see attached, Pocket 4.2)

   – Other students will write “thank you” letters demonstrating understanding of this format

II. LANGUAGE OBJECTIVE

1. Same as Content Objective 1
III. Functional/Notional Chart For Lesson 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Formulae</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Write</td>
<td>Thank you letter</td>
<td>• Thank you for __________.</td>
<td>• Subject drop in sentences</td>
<td>• the present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Thanks for __________.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• your present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• the gift</td>
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<td>• your gift</td>
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<td>• your present of</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• your gift of</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• the shirt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• the earrings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• the check</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write</td>
<td>Complimentary close of friendly letter</td>
<td>• Sincerely,</td>
<td>• Capitalization in letter closing</td>
<td>• same as in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Sincerely yours,</td>
<td>• Comma after letter closing</td>
<td>formulae grid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Thank you again,</td>
<td></td>
<td>to the left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Thanks again,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Peace,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Love,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Your friend,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
IV. MATERIALS: blackboard, chalk, bulletin board, stapler, pens, paper, and teacher and student copies of teacher-made handouts for the following: the “Format for a ‘Thank you’ Letter”/“Example of a ‘Thank you’ Letter” (see attached: Pocket 4.1), and the “Assignment for Pre-production ELLs and Early Production ELLs” (see attached: Pocket 4.2).

V. ACTIVITIES

1. (three minutes)

Pointing to Quinceanera, listed after Rites of Passage in the Unit Schedule on the blackboard, the teacher notes that yesterday they read a newspaper article about Yesse Reveron’s quinceanera. The teacher adds, “Yesse’s parents – and Yesse – must have done a lot of planning and spent a lot of money for this “coming of age” rite of passage, in which this 16-year-old girl became a woman.” Pointing to the third item on the Unit Schedule – the Xhosa circumcision – the teacher tells students that tomorrow they will read about that. But the teacher tells students that since this is, after all, an English class, they will take advantage of the situation created by the quinceanera article to have students write a “thank you” letter.

He will tell them they could pretend they either are Yesse, who could thank anyone who gave her a gift or otherwise helped her. Or, the teacher will add, the students could pretend they are Yesse’s mother (Anamin Reveron) or father (Thomas Reveron) and write a “thank you” letter to anybody involved with this special ceremony. Pointing to Today’s Objective (previously written on the blackboard), he reads this today’s objective: “Write a ‘thank you’ letter.”
2. (seven minutes)

The teacher tells students that before starting to write the letter, they will do a few things to help prepare them to do this well.

The teacher explains that a “thank you” letter is an example of a “friendly letter.” He points to the blackboard where he previously wrote two outlines, one for the format of a “business letter,” and the other for a “friendly letter.” Basically, these two vertically shaped rectangles (with some words and punctuation), illustrate that unlike the format for a business letter, a friendly letter isn’t written in “block” style. The teacher tells students that the friendly letter instead has the date and closing shifted to the right side of the page. Also, he says the friendly letter uses indentation for each paragraph in the body of the letter. Furthermore, after the greeting, the friendly letter uses a comma instead of a colon. *(The teacher makes the distinction between these two types of letters because some students probably have learned how to write a business letter in other classes.)*

The teacher gives students the handout that includes both the “Format for a ‘Thank you’ Letter” and the “Example of a ‘Thank you’ Letter” *(see attached, Pocket 4.1).* Repeating that a “thank you” letter is a type of friendly letter, the teacher reviews the format with students.

Then he reviews the model letter, showing how it uses this format. Pointing to the model letter, the teacher also explains how the date is punctuated (with a period after any abbreviation of a month, and with a comma after the numbered day of the month); that writers must put a comma after the name in the greeting; and that writers must put a comma after the closing. Furthermore, the teacher tells students that if there are two or more words in the closing, only the first word is capitalized and not any words after it.

Besides using the correct format, says the teacher, writers must decide what to say in a
“thank you” letter.

Pointing again to the model letter he wrote, the teacher tells students that an effective and easy way to write such a letter is simply to first thank the person for whatever the person gave you or did for you; second, add another “friendly” sentence or a few more such sentences; and finally, write, “Thanks again.” On the blackboard the teacher will write:

1. Thank the person for what the person did.

2. Say something friendly.

3. Write: Thanks again.

3. (three minutes)

Before starting to write the “thank you” letters, the teacher tells students he first wants them each to briefly talk in their home groups about two questions. The teacher will say, “First, who might Yesse – or either one of her parents – want to thank? If you want to thank a gift-giver or the florist, for example, you can make up the names of such people. Second, what might the writer be thanking the person for?” As students have this discussion in their groups, the teacher circulates and helps students as necessary.

4. (five minutes)

Returning to a whole-class activity, the teacher asks students who Yesse or her parents might have wanted to thank, and why. As students make suggestions, the teacher tries to let this activity evolve into a natural conversation, so students will realize that in such a situation, Yesse and her parents have a lot to be thankful for. The teacher emphasizes that although it’s good to know how to write a “thank you” letter, it’s also good to actually write and send such letters to
people. Regarding gifts, the teacher also will explain that in our society, when a person gives a gift at an occasion such as a quinceanera, graduation, or anniversary party, the person expects to receive a “thank you” letter. It’s considered to be good manners, the teacher will say.

5. (20 minutes)

Now the teacher tells students to start writing the “thank you” letters. They will work in their home groups, where they can help each other and use their first language.

The teacher gives Pre-production ELLs and Early Production ELLs a handout explaining the differentiated assignment for these two categories of ELLs. This assignment basically consists of the students completing a cloze-type letter (see attached, Pocket 4.2). The teacher tells these students that after completing this assignment they could try writing an entire such letter by themselves, using English or their first language.

During this activity, the teacher circulates, helping students as necessary. Any student completing his or her work could help other students or work on an extra-credit assignment that the teacher would have written on the blackboard after students started their letters. (The teacher gives this assignment because undoubtedly some students would complete this assignment quickly, and he wants to challenge them with this cognitively challenging assignment.)

This assignment (which could be at home) would read as follows: Use the “friendly letter” format to write a letter to the editor of the newspaper. You can write the letter as yourself (as a reader), or you can pretend you are Yesse, her mother (Anamin Reveron), or her father (Thomas Reveron). Write about what you (or any one of them) thought of this article about Yesse’s quinceanera. For the greeting, write Dear Editor.
6. *(five minutes)*

Before closing this lesson, the teacher gives any student wanting to read his or her letter the opportunity to do so. This only would be done if a student is willing to so share his or her writing. The teacher collects any student “thank you” letters not previously given to him and collects any completed “letter to the editor.” Any student who started the letter to the editor but didn’t complete it would be given the opportunity to take it home and complete it. The teacher asks individual students if he would like their letters posted on the “Rites of Passage” blackboard. Letters by students giving such permission then are stapled to the bulletin board by the teacher or student. Finally, the teacher tells students that if any of them would like more extra-credit work, they could write a real “thank you” letter that they might later give to the person they are thanking; and that any student writing such a letter should show it to the teacher at the next class.

**VI. DAILY ASSESSMENT:** Same as in Lesson 1 (pg. 1.11)

**VII. RATIONALE FOR MODIFICATIONS**

This lesson is a follow-up to the previous lesson, which was based on my original Lesson 4 *(see attached, Pocket 3.5)* for this unit. In planning the previous lesson, I realized it gave me a good opportunity to give all students a practical lesson in writing a “thank you” letter, so I turned this idea into this lesson. Although I obviously can’t compare this modified lesson with an original lesson that was written (since it wasn’t), I can explain how it is different from the way I normally would have taught such a lesson in a mainstream class without making modifications for ELLs.
Normally, I would not have done the following: have students brainstorm in a group before the letter-writing; provide student copies of the graphic organizer for the letter format and the model of the “thank you” letter (both of which normally I only would have shown on the blackboard); and provide differentiated assignments. Although my rationale was to make this lesson more accessible to ELLs, the lesson now will be much clearer for all my students.
# Format for a “Thank you” Letter

Date

Greetings,

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

Closing,

Signature

Your name in non-cursive print

# Example of a “Thank you” Letter

Sept. 29, 2004

Dear Alex,

Thank you for giving me that shirt for my birthday. It was very thoughtful of you. Also, thanks for coming to my party. It was good to see you again. Let’s get together again soon. Thanks again.

Sincerely yours,

Mark McGrath
Assignment for Pre-production ELLs and Early Production ELLs

# Fill in the blanks. Except for the blank on top, and the two lowest blanks on the bottom, fill the blanks from the seven words printed in bold at the bottom of this page.

1) Write today's date → __________________

2) Maria,

3) you for the ___________ you gave me at my ____________
on ___________. The earrings are beautiful, and I plan to wear them when I go out this weekend. It was ___________ thoughtful of you to give me this present. I look forward to seeing you again ___________. Thanks again.

4) ____________

5) ____________

6) ____________

7) ____________

8) ____________

9) ____________

10) Sign your name → __________________

11) Print your name → __________________

present soon Dear quinceanera

Thank Saturday Sincerely,
Checklists
FLA 518: TAT Sheltered ELL Strategies Checklist

Write the PAGE NUMBERS and any other identifying features to identify those parts of your lessons that employ the following strategies.

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<td>V.2. Assign appropriate tasks for varying levels</td>
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<td>3.1 Packet 3.4</td>
<td>4.6 Packet 2.3</td>
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<th>VI. Literacy/Academic Development</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>3.7</td>
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<td></td>
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81a
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<th>Lesson</th>
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<td>Present tense</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compound subject</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subject-Verb agreement</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interrogatives</td>
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<td>Subject drop in sentence</td>
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## Functions Checklist

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<td>Identify</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asking questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Explain why</td>
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<tr>
<td>Write</td>
<td>4</td>
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Original Lessons
Lesson Plan 1

**Goal:** to improve vocabulary comprehension skills

**Objectives:** to understand the meanings of *rites of passage*; of *coming of age*; of *initiation*; and of selected vocabulary words from Chapter 4 of *Long Walk to Freedom*, the autobiography of Nelson Mandela

**Description of Class:** mixed-level (grades 9-12) English class at the Enlightenment School, a public alternative secondary school in Waterbury where each class lasts 43 minutes and where the average number of students in class on any given day is eight

**Activities:** On the blackboard, the phrase *rites of passage*; the phrase *coming of age*; the word *initiation*; and the name *Nelson Mandela* will be written before class on one section of the blackboard, while on another section will be written these vocabulary words from the next day’s reading assignment: *secluded, seclusion, secretion, isolated, contradiction, irresponsible, uncircumcised, transition, emerge, reemergence, remnant, symbolized, and benefactor*. When class starts, the teacher briefly will explain the new unit on “Coming of Age/Initiation” that is beginning today. After defining *rites of passage, coming of age, and initiation* — and eliciting examples of each from the students (and writing these and other answers on the blackboard, near these respective phrases) — the teacher will briefly explain who Nelson Mandela is (if a student cannot produce the correct answer). Then the teacher will explain that in the following day’s class we will read a chapter from Nelson Mandela’s autobiography that deals with the time when Nelson, at approximately the same age as the students, went through his people’s circumcision ritual, the coming-of-age ritual that marks the rite of passage in which a Xhosa male is initiated into manhood. After writing *circumcision* on the blackboard, the teacher will ask students if they can define it. To teach or reinforce this definition, the teacher will use the word part strategy to
break down this word, helping to teach and/or reinforce its definition. Next, the teacher will show the circumcision ritual part of the movie *Roots* to help students visualize the circumcision ritual they will be reading about. Then the teacher will tell students that before reading this interesting chapter the next day they will do a vocabulary lesson to learn words they need to know to more fully enjoy and understand this chapter. At this time the teacher will discuss the vocabulary words on the blackboard (listed above) to help students comprehend these words. After this, the teacher will distribute glossary sheets and vocabulary exercise handouts (both are attached to this lesson plan). Students will be allowed to help each other complete this exercise, and the teacher will circulate through the room, helping as necessary. When students complete these handouts (either in that class or as homework due at the start of the next class), the teacher will review the answers, asking students to call out each answer.
Glossary, Chapter 4, *Long Walk to Freedom*

**ANESTHETIC:** something that reduces or eliminates pain  
**ASSEGAI:** a thin spear with an iron tip, used in South Africa  
**BENEFACCTOR:** a person who does good things for another person or other persons  
**CIRCUMCISION:** the cutting off of all or part of foreskin of penis  
**COMRADE:** noun referring to a close friendship  
**CONTRACTION:** noun referring to something that seems to mean the opposite  
**CUSTOMS:** the things that people in a culture generally do  
**DISABLED:** made unable to do something  
**EMERGE:** to come out from a place  
**EXPLOIT:** an adventure  
**FORESKIN:** the fold of skin around the end of the penis  
**HEIFERS:** a young cow that has not yet given birth  
**HEIR:** person who inherits another person’s things and/or title after the other person dies  
**INITIATES:** people being brought into a fraternity, club, etc., through a special ceremony  
**IRRESPONSIBLE:** not responsible  
**ISOLATED:** as adjective this means off on own, away from others  
**KRAAL:** a fenced-in place for animals in South Africa  
**MAIZE:** corn  
**MARTIAL:** adjective meaning in a warlike way  
**MONARCH:** a one-person ruler such as a king or queen  
**MOURNING:** acting with grief or sadness for somebody or something dead or lost  
**MYTH:** a story told that is not actually true  
**OCHER:** an earthy clay that usually is yellow or reddish brown  
**OPPRESSION:** the keeping down by unjust use of power or authority  
**PROCEDURE:** the process or way in which something is done  
**PURIFICATION:** noun referring to act of freeing from guilt, sin, or uncleanness  
**PURITY:** noun referring to being pure or clean, such as from evil or sin  
**REGENT:** a person who rules a place for time when ruler is too young  
**REEMERGENCE:** noun referring to coming out again  
**REGALLED:** entertained  
**REMNANT:** something that is left from what was there before  
**RITE OF PASSAGE:** a ceremony marking a big change in a person’s life  
**RITUALS:** things done in usual way, such as during a religious ceremony  
**SECLUDED:** off on its own, away from other people and buildings  
**SECLUSION:** noun referring to being away from most other people  
**SECRETIONS:** substances made by a gland that come out from body  
**STIGMATIZED:** seen as disgraced or unworthy  
**STOICISM:** belief in which person acts as if he doesn’t care about pleasure or pain  
**SYMBOLIZED:** stood for something else; represented something else  
**TRADITION:** something normally done in one’s culture  
**TRANSITION:** a period between different stages or parts  
**TRIAL:** a test or hardship  
**UNCIRCUMCISED:** adjective meaning not circumcised – foreskin still at end of penis
I. Match Meanings

1. CIRCUMCISION:  
   A. an adventure

2. EXPLOIT:  
   B. a test or hardship

3. REGENT:  
   C. a fenced-in place

4. FORESKIN:  
   D. the cutting off of foreskin

5. TRIAL:  
   E. corn

6. TRANSITION:  
   F. a person who acts as ruler

7. KRAAL:  
   G. it reduces pain

8. MAIZE:  
   H. in-between period

9. ANESTHETIC:  
   I. skin at end of penis

II. More Matches

1. ASSEGAI:  
   A. a way of doing something

2. BENEFACCTOR:  
   B. a person who inherits

3. PROCEDURE:  
   C. a story that isn’t true

4. MYTH:  
   D. entertained

5. REGALED:  
   E. a spear

6. OCHER:  
   F. an earthy clay

7. MONARCH:  
   G. a person who does good things for others

8. HEIR:  
   H. young cows

9. HEIFERS:  
   I. a one-person ruler
V. FILL IN BLANKS

1. A RITE OF PASSAGE is a __________ marking a big __________ in a person’s __________.
2. For a male, a CIRCUMCISION is a rite of passage in which the __________ of the penis is cut off.
3. The FORESKIN consists of __________ around the end of the penis.
4. RITUALS are things done in the __________ way, such as during a religious __________.
5. For the males, circumcision is a TRIAL because it is a __________ or __________.
6. The males are sent to an ISOLATED place, meaning they are in a place __________ from other people.
7. Before being circumcised, the boys must perform an EXPLOIT, which is another word for __________.
8. They stole a pig from a KRAAL, which is a __________ place.
9. MAIZE, a word derived from the language of the Taino Indians in places such as Puerto Rico, means the same thing as __________.
10. A MYTH about how great it is to work in mines is a story that is not __________.
11. The foreskin is cut off through the use of an ASSEGAI, which is a __________.
12. Since no ANESTHETIC is used, this means nothing is done to __________ the pain caused by the assegai’s cutting the foreskin.
13. The COMRADESHIP of the boys refers to their __________ during this rite of passage.
14. A MONARCH is a one-person __________ such as a __________ or __________.
15. A REGENT takes the __________ of the person who will become the ruler at a certain age.
16. RITUALS are things done in the __________ way, especially during a special __________.
17. SECRETIONS are substances made by a gland that leave the __________.
18. STOICISM refers to people’s acting as if they don’t care about __________ or __________.
19. A TRANSITION is a __________ between different __________.
20. An UNCIRCUMCISED male would not be __________ and would still have his __________.
21. Such a male could not be a HEIR, meaning he never could __________ property.
22. HEIFERS are young __________.
23. If a person in pain is DISABLED for a while, that person is __________ to do things for that time.
24. The CUSTOMS of a people such as the Xhosa are the things that people in a __________ generally do.
25. A BENEFACTOR is a person who does __________ things for another person or other people.
VI. Word Sorts: Cross Out the Word that Least Fits with Other Words in that Row

1. assegai  gun  knife  kraal
2. customs  transitions  rituals  traditions
3. symbolized  isolated  alone  secluded
4. monarch  regent  remnant  president

VII. Select Word of Phrase from Below that Best Fits in Blank in Following Passage

anesthetic  circumcision  comraderie  exploit
isolated  rite of passage  stigmatized  stoicism

A ceremony marking a big change in a person's life is called a ___________. For the Xhosa of South Africa, the transition from boyhood to manhood is made through the ceremony of ___________. If a male does not have this done, he would be ___________ for the rest of his life and not be able to marry, to be a heir to property, or participate in tribal meetings. The boys are taken to an ___________ place where the procedure will take place. A ___________ develops between these boys, who must participate in some ___________, an adventure such as stealing a pig from a kraal, for example. Before the actual circumcision, no ___________ is given, meaning intense pain will be felt when the assegai removes the foreskin. But the boys try to bear this pain with ___________, so they will not be disabled during this experience.
Lesson Plan 2

**Goal:** to improve reading skills and to learn about another culture (Xhosa) and its traditional coming-of-age/initiation rite of passage for males

**Objectives:** to complete the reading of today’s chapter (whether following along or sometimes reading aloud), to answer comprehension questions pertaining to this male circumcision ritual, and to discuss their reactions to it

**Description of Group:** mixed-level (grades 9-12) English class at the Enlightenment School, a public alternative secondary school in Waterbury where each class lasts 43 minutes and where the average number of students in class on any given day is eight

**Activities:** First, the teacher and students briefly will review the meaning of the following words, names, and phrases from the previous day’s lesson: *rites of passage; coming of age; initiation; Nelson Mandela; Xhosa; and South Africa.* Second, the teacher will give students copies of Chapter 4 of Mandela’s *Long Walk to Freedom* (see attached). With students and teacher then sitting at desks arranged in a circle, student volunteers will take turns reading a paragraph aloud, as other students follow along in their handouts. At pre-determined points (and as otherwise deemed necessary), the teacher will stop to ask questions. After the first sentence, the instructor will ask, “What does it mean to become a man? And “How does a person become a man in our society?” Also, “How does a girl become a woman?” After paragraph 2, “How did Nelson feel about this custom at this time?” After paragraph 3, “Do we have any myths such as this myth about how great it would be to run away to work in the mines?” After paragraph 4, “Do you know of any similar customs in our society, in which a person must do something before joining a group?” After paragraph 5, “Why did they do a dance that made them forget for a moment what lay ahead?” Before paragraph 16, “What type of things do you think the main speaker will say?”
After paragraph 16, “Who is Qumata?” After paragraph 17, “Why did the people not want to hear what the chief said?” After paragraph 18, “What was the seed?” After paragraph 19, “Why couldn’t he resist looking back?” In the remaining time left in class, students will be encouraged to react to this selection and have a general discussion of it.
hungry and greedy for land, and the black man shared the land with
him as they shared the air and water; land was not for man to possess.
But the white man took the land as you might seize another man’s
horse.

I did not yet know that the real history of our country was not
to be found in standard British textbooks, which claimed South
Africa began with the landing of Jan Van Riebeeck at the Cape of
Good Hope in 1652. It was from Chief Joyi that I began to discover
that the history of the Bantu-speaking peoples began far to the north,
in a country of lakes and green plains and valleys, and that slowly
over the millennia we made our way down to the very tip of this
great continent. However, I later discovered that Chief Joyi’s ac-
count of African history, particularly after 1652, was not always so
accurate.

In Mqhekezweni, I felt not unlike the proverbial country boy who
comes to the big city. Mqhekezweni was far more sophisticated than
Qunu, whose residents were regarded as backward by the people of
Mqhekezweni. The regent was loath to have me visit Qunu, thinking
I would regress and fall into bad company back in my old village.
When I did visit, I sensed that my mother had been briefed by the
regent, for she would question me closely as to whom I was playing
with. On many occasions, however, the regent would arrange for
my mother and sisters to be brought to the Great Place.

When I first arrived in Mqhekezweni I was regarded by some of
my peers as a yokel who was hopelessly unequipped to exist in the
rarefied atmosphere of the Great Place. As young men will, I did
my best to appear suave and sophisticated. In church one day, I had
noticed a lovely young woman who was one of the daughters of
the Reverend Matyolo. Her name was Winnie, and I asked her out
and she accepted. She was keen on me, but her eldest sister,
nomaMpondi, regarded me as hopelessly backward. She told her
sister that I was a barbarian who was not good enough for the
daughter of Reverend Matyolo. To prove to her younger sister how
uncivilized I was, she invited me to the rectory for lunch. I was still
used to eating at home, where we did not use knife and fork. At
the family table, this mischievous older sister handed me a plate that
contained a single chicken wing. But the wing, instead of being soft
and tender, was a bit tough, so the meat did not fall easily off the
bone.

I watched the others using their knives and forks with ease and
slowly picked up mine. I observed the others for a few moments,
and then attempted to carve my little wing. At first I just moved it
around the plate, hoping that the flesh would fall from the bone.
Then I tried in vain to pin the thing down, and cut it, but it eluded
me, and in my frustration I was clanking my knife on the plate. I
tried this repeatedly and then noticed that the older sister was smil-
ing at me and looking knowingly at the younger sister as if to say,
“I told you so.” I struggled and struggled and became wet with
perspiration, but I did not want to admit defeat and pick the infernal
thing up with my hands. I did not eat much chicken that day at
luncheon.

Afterward the older sister told the younger, “You will waste your
whole life if you fall in love with such a backward boy,” but I am
happy to say the young lady did not listen — she loved me, as
backward as I was. Eventually, of course, we went different ways
and drifted apart. She attended a different school, and qualified as
a teacher. We corresponded for a few years and then I lost track of
her, but by that time I had considerably improved my table etiquette.
to two grass huts in a secluded valley on the banks of the Mbashe River, known as Tyhalarha, the traditional place of circumcision for Thembu kings. The huts were seclusion lodges, where we were to live isolated from society. It was a sacred time; I felt happy and fulfilled taking part in my people’s customs and ready to make the transition from boyhood to manhood.

We had moved to Tyhalarha by the river a few days before the actual circumcision ceremony. These last few days of boyhood were spent with the other initiates, and I found the camaraderie enjoyable. The lodge was near the home of Banabakhe Blayi, the wealthiest and most popular boy at the circumcision school. He was an engaging fellow, a champion stick-fighter and a glamour boy, whose many girlfriends kept us all supplied with delicacies. Although he could neither read nor write, he was one of the most intelligent among us. He regaled us with stories of his trips to Johannesburg, a place none of us had ever been before. He so thrilled us with tales of the mines that he almost persuaded me that to be a miner was more alluring than to be a monarch. Miners had a mystique; to be a miner meant to be strong and daring, the ideal of manhood. Much later, I realized that it was the exaggerated tales of boys like Banabakhe that caused so many young men to run away to work in the mines of Johannesburg, where they often lost their health and their lives. In those days, working in the mines was almost as much of a rite of passage as circumcision school, a myth that helped the mine-owners more than it helped my people.

A custom of circumcision school is that one must perform a daring exploit before the ceremony. In days of old, this might have involved a cattle raid or even a battle, but in our time the deed was more mischievous than martial. Two nights before we moved to Tyhalarha, we decided to steal a pig. In Mqhekezweni there was a tribesman with an ornery old pig. To avoid making noise and alarming him, we arranged for the pig to do our work for us. We took handfuls of sediment from homemade African beer, which has a strong scent much favored by pigs, and placed it upwind of the pig. The pig was so aroused by the scent that he came out of the kraal, following a trail we had laid, gradually made his way to us, wheezing and snorting and eating the sediment. When he got near us, we captured the poor pig, slaughtered it, and then built a fire and ate roast pork underneath the stars. No piece of pork has ever tasted as good before or since.

The night before the circumcision, there was a ceremony near our huts with singing and dancing. Women came from the nearby villages, and we danced to their singing and clapping. As the music became faster and louder, our dance turned more frenzied and we forgot for a moment what lay ahead.

At dawn, when the stars were still in the sky, we began our preparations. We were escorted to the river to bathe in its cold waters, a ritual that signified our purification before the ceremony. The ceremony was at midday, and we were commanded to stand in a row in a clearing some distance from the river where a crowd of parents and relatives, including the regent, as well as a handful of chiefs and counselors, had gathered. We were clad only in our blankets, and as the ceremony began, with drums pounding, we were ordered to sit on a blanket on the ground with our legs spread out in front of us. I was tense and anxious, uncertain of how I would react when the critical moment came. Flinching or crying out was a sign of weakness and stigmatized one’s manhood. I was determined not to disgrace myself, the group, or my guardian. Circumcision is a trial of bravery and stoicism; no anesthetic is used; a man must suffer in silence.

To the right, out of the corner of my eye, I could see a thin, elderly man emerge from a tent and kneel in front of the first boy. There was excitement in the crowd, and I shuddered slightly knowing that the ritual was about to begin. The old man was a famous ingcabi, a circumcision expert, from Gealekaland, who would use his assegai to change us from boys to men with a single blow.

Suddenly, I heard the first boy cry out, “Ndwe!” (I am a man!), which we were trained to say in the moment of circumcision. Seconds later, I heard Justice’s strangled voice pronounce the same phrase. There were now two boys before the ingcabi reached me, and my mind must have gone blank because before I knew it, the old man was kneeling in front of me. I looked directly into his eyes. He was pale, and though the day was cold, his face was shining with perspiration. His hands moved so fast they seemed to be controlled by an otherworldly force. Without a word, he took my foreskin, pulled it forward, and then, in a single mo’ 3 , brought
down his assegai. I felt as if fire was shooting through my veins; the pain was so intense that I buried my chin into my chest. Many seconds seemed to pass before I remembered the cry, and then I recovered and called out, “Ndlovindola!”

I looked down and saw a perfect cut, clean and round like a ring. But I felt ashamed because the other boys seemed much stronger and braver than I had been; they had called out more promptly than I had. I was distressed that I had been disabled, however briefly, by the pain, and I did my best to hide my agony. A boy may cry; a man conceals his pain.

I had now taken the essential step in the life of every Xhosa man. Now, I might marry, set up my own home, and plow my own field. I could now be admitted to the councils of the community; my words would be taken seriously. At the ceremony, I was given my circumcision name, Dalibunga, meaning “Founder of the Bunga,” the traditional ruling body of the Transkei. To Xhosa traditionalists, this name is more acceptable than either of my two previous given names, Rolihlahla or Nelson, and I was proud to hear my new name pronounced: Dalibunga.

Immediately after the blow had been delivered, an assistant who follows the circumcision master takes the foreskin that is on the ground and ties it to a corner of your blanket. Our wounds were then dressed with a healing plant, the leaves of which were thorny on the outside but smooth on the inside, which absorbed the blood and other secretions.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, we returned to our huts, where a fire was burning with wet wood that cast off clouds of smoke, which was thought to promote healing. We were ordered to lie on our backs in the smoky huts, with one leg flat, and one leg bent. We were now abakhlwetha, initiates into the world of manhood. We were looked after by an amakhankatha, or guardian, who explained the rules we must follow if we were to enter manhood properly. The first chore of the amakhankatha was to paint our naked and shaved bodies from head to foot in white ocher, turning us into ghosts. The white chalk symbolized our purity, and I still recall how stiff the dried clay felt on my body.

That first night, at midnight, an attendant, or ikhankatha, crept around the hut, gently waking each of us. We were then instructed to leave the hut and go tramping through the night to bury our foreskins. The traditional reason for this practice was so that our foreskins would be hidden before wizards could use them for evil purposes, but, symbolically, we were also burying our youth. I did not want to leave the warm hut and wander through the bush in the darkness, but I walked into the trees and, after a few minutes, untied my foreskin and buried it in the earth. I felt as though I had now discarded the last remnant of my childhood.

We lived in our two huts — thirteen in each — while our wounds healed. When outside the huts, we were covered in blankets, for we were not allowed to be seen by women. It was a period of quietude, a kind of spiritual preparation for the trials of manhood that lay ahead. On the day of our reemergence, we went down to the river early in the morning to wash away the white ocher in the waters of the Mbashe. Once we were clean and dry, we were coated in red ocher. The tradition was that one should sleep with a woman, who later may become one’s wife, and she rubs off the pigment with her body. In my case, however, the ocher was removed with a mixture of fat and lard.

At the end of our seclusion, the lodges and all their contents were burned, destroying our last links to childhood, and a great ceremony was held to welcome us as men to society. Our families, friends, and local chiefs gathered for speeches, songs, and gift-giving. I was given two heifers and four sheep, and felt far richer than I ever had before. I who had never owned anything suddenly possessed property. It was a heady feeling, even though my gifts were paltry next to those of Justice, who inherited an entire herd. I was not jealous of Justice’s gifts. He was the son of a king; I was merely destined to be a counselor to a king. I felt strong and proud that day. I remember walking differently on that day, straighter, taller, firmer. I was hopeful, and thinking that I might someday have wealth, property, and status.

The main speaker of the day was Chief Meliqqili, the son of Dalindyabo, and after listening to him, my gaily colored dreams suddenly darkened. He began conventionally, remarking on how fine it was that we were continuing a tradition that had been going on for as long as anyone could remember. Then he turned to us and his tone suddenly changed. “There sit our sons,” he said. “Young, healthy, and handsome, the flower of the Xhosa tribe, the pride of
our nation. We have just circumcised them in a ritual that promises them manhood, but I am here to tell you that it is an empty, illusory promise, a promise that can never be fulfilled. For we Xhosas, and all black South Africans, are a conquered people. We are slaves in our own country. We are tenants on our own soil. We have no strength, no power, no control over our own destiny in the land of our birth. They will go to cities where they will live in shacks and drink cheap alcohol all because we have no land to give them where they could prosper and multiply. They will cough their lungs out deep in the bowels of the white man’s mines, destroying their health, never seeing the sun, so that the white man can live a life of unequaled prosperity. Among these young men are chiefs who will never rule because we have no power to govern ourselves; soldiers who will never fight for we have no weapons to fight with; scholars who will never teach because we have no place for them to study. The abilities, the intelligence, the promise of these young men will be squandered in their attempt to eke out a living doing the simplest, most mindless chores for the white man. These gifts today are naught, for we cannot give them the greatest gift of all, which is freedom and independence. I well know that Qamata is all-seeing and never sleeps, but I have a suspicion that Qamata may in fact be dozing. If this is the case, the sooner I die the better because then I can meet him and shake him awake and tell him that the children of Ngubengcuka, the flower of the Xhosa nation, are dying."

The audience had become more and more quiet as Chief Meligqili spoke and, I think, more and more angry. No one wanted to hear the words that he spoke that day. I know that I myself did not want to hear them. I was cross rather than aroused by the chief's remarks, dismissing his words as the abusive comments of an ignorant man who was unable to appreciate the value of the education and benefits that the white man had brought to our country. At the time, I looked on the white man not as an oppressor but as a benefactor, and I thought the chief was enormously ungrateful. This upstart chief was ruining my day, spoiling the proud feeling with wrong-headed remarks.

But without exactly understanding why, his words soon began to work in me. He had planted a seed, and though I let that seed dorman for a long season, it eventually began to grow. Later, I realized that the ignorant man that day was not the chief but myself.

After the ceremony, I walked back to the river and watched it meander on its way to where, many miles distant, it emptied into the Indian Ocean. I had never crossed that river, and I knew little or nothing of the world beyond it, a world that beckoned me that day. It was almost sunset and I hurried on to where our seclusion lodges had been. Though it was forbidden to look back while the lodges were burning, I could not resist. When I reached the area, all that remained were two pyramids of ashes by a large mimosa tree. In these ash heaps lay a lost and delightful world, the world of my childhood, the world of sweet and irresponsible days at Qunu and Mqhekezweni. Now I was a man, and I would never again play tinini, or steal maize, or drink milk from a cow's udder. I was already in mourning for my own youth. Looking back, I know that I was not a man that day and would not truly become one for many years.

UNLIKE MOST OF THE OTHERS with whom I had been at circumcision school, I was not destined to work in the gold mines on the Reef. The regent had often told me, “It is not for you to spend your life mining the white man’s gold, never knowing how to write your name.” My destiny was to become a counselor to Sabata, and for that I had to be educated. I returned to Mqhekezweni after the ceremony, but not for very long, for I was about to cross the Mbashe River for the first time on my way to Clarkebury Boarding Institute in the district of Engcobo.

I was again leaving home, but I was eager to see how I would fare in the wider world. The regent himself drove me to Engcobo in his majestic Ford V8. Before leaving, he had organized a celebration for my having passed Standard V and been admitted to Clarkebury. A sheep was slaughtered and there was dancing and singing — it was the first celebration that I had ever had in my own honor, and I greatly enjoyed it. The regent gave me my first pair of boots, a sign of manhood, and that night I polished them anew, even though they were already shiny.
Lesson Plan 3 (which includes the study guide as an assessment tool) "Reading guide" for Mandela Reading.

Goal: to improve vocabulary, reading comprehension, and writing similar to the modified reading guide in my modified Lesson 3.

Objectives: to use context clues to determine the meaning of vocabulary words; to recall facts; to paraphrase; to state an opinion; to determine the author's point of view; and to infer meaning.

Description of Class: mixed-level (grades 9-12) English class at the Enlightenment School, a public alternative secondary school in Waterbury where each class lasts 43 minutes and where the average number of students in class on any given day is eight.

Activities: First, the teacher will review the previous class by asking students to summarize the Mandela reading from that class. Then the teacher will distribute copies of a study guide (see attached) to students, telling them to try their best to complete as many of the questions as they can, without trying to rush through this work. Students will be allowed to help each other on this work, and the teacher will circulate through the room, helping as necessary. Later in class, the teacher will ask students to call out the answers to various questions. Students will be told they have the option of taking the handout (and chapter) home and doing additional work on it, for submission for extra credit at the next class.
Study Guide to Chapter 4 of *Long Walk to Freedom* (complete after reading)

**Reading in Context** (Circle Best Answer)

I. (paragraph 3) He was an engaging fellow, a champion stick-fighter and a glamour boy, whose many girlfriends kept us all supplied with delicacies. Although he could neither read nor write, he was one of the most intelligent among us. He regaled us with stories of his trips to Johannesburg, a place none of us had ever been before. He so thrilled us with tales of the mines that he almost persuaded me that to be a miner was more alluring than to be a monarch.

1. ENGAGING most nearly means:
   A. rude
   B. charming
   C. ugly

2. REGALED most nearly means:
   A. entertained
   B. bored
   C. educated

3. ALLURING most nearly means:
   A. stupid
   B. undesirable
   C. attractive

II. (paragraph 9) A boy may cry; a man conceals his pain.

1. CONCEALS most nearly means:
   A. brags about
   B. hides
   C. shows

III. (paragraph 14). We lived in our two huts – thirteen in each – while our wounds healed. When outside the huts, we were covered in blankets, for we were not allowed to be seen by women. It was a period of quietude.

1. QUIETUDE most nearly means:
   A. period of noise
   B. period of being very busy
   C. period of quiet

IV. (par. 15). I was given two heifers and four sheep, and felt far richer than I ever had before. I who had never owned anything suddenly possessed property. It was a heady feeling, even though my gifts were paltry next to those of Justice, who inherited an entire herd.

1. HEADY most nearly means:
   A. very bad
   B. very good
   C. neutral
V. (par. 16). “There sit our sons,” he said, “young, healthy, and handsome, the flower of the Xhosa tribe, the pride of our nation.”

1. THE FLOWER OF THE XHOSA TRIBE most nearly means:
   A. the worst ones
   B. the average ones
   C. the best ones

VI. (par. 16). The abilities, the intelligence, the promise of these young men will be squandered in their attempt to eke out a living doing the simplest, most mindless chores for the white man.

1. SQUANDERED most nearly means:
   A. used
   B. wasted
   C. improved

VII. (par. 17). At the time, I looked on the white man not as an oppressor but as a benefactor, and I thought the chief was enormously ungrateful.

1. OPPRESSOR most nearly means:
   A. person keeping others down
   B. person helping others
   C. persons killing others

**Other Questions**

1. What was the exploit of Nelson and his friends before their circumcision?

2. What was the boys’ chore after painting themselves with the ochre?

3. Why did they burn the wet wood as the boys were recovering from the circumcision?

4. Do you think Nelson had a girlfriend at the time? How did you infer (figure out) this answer?

5. Did the author think it was a good idea for youths to go off and work in the mines?

6. Briefly paraphrase what the chief said in his speech.

7. What is a rite of passage?
8. List three examples of rites of passage.

9. In Xhosa tradition, how does a boy become a man?

10. If you were a 16-year-old Xhosa male, would you participate in the circumcision ritual? Why or why not?

11. Why do you think no anesthetic was used to reduce or eliminate the pain?

12. Do you think the author thought circumcision was a good tradition for his people? Why do you think he thought that?

13. What do you think Mandela meant by the last sentence in the chapter?

14. List examples of sensory details from this chapter for:
   A. smells:
   
   B. sounds:
   
   C. sights:
   
   D. feelings:
   
   E. touches:

15. Try to visualize the area where the circumcision and related rituals happened. Describe it through a drawing, a map, or a paragraph. (Use a separate sheet of paper – lined or unlined – to complete this activity.)

16. R.A.F.T. Activity: Pretend you are 16-year-old Nelson Mandela, writing a letter to a 14-year-old friend, in which you tell your friend what this circumcision experience was like and why you think this is an experience that all Xhosa males should undergo. (Use a separate sheet of lined paper to complete this activity.)
Lesson Plan 4

Goals: to improve reading comprehension and to learn about another culture (Latina) and its traditional coming-of-age rite of passage for females (the quinceanera)

Objectives: to complete the reading of the article headlined “Coming of Age, Traditional Hispanic Ceremony Marks Entry into Womanhood for 16-year-old” from Dec. 12, 2002, issue of the Republican-American (a Waterbury, Conn., daily newspaper – a copy of this article is attached)

Description of Class: mixed-level (grades 9-12) English class at the Enlightenment School, a public alternative secondary school in Waterbury where each class lasts 43 minutes and where the average number of students in class on any given day is eight

Activities: On the blackboard, before class, will appear the words quinceanera as well as selected other words deemed most important for students to understand for effective comprehension of this newspaper article (traditional, ritual, significance, medieval, ancient, origins, blend, ornate, enchanting, sanctuary, elaborate, symbolizes, abstain, tier; as well as words such as headline, byline, cutline, and column – newspaper terms that also will be introduced to students at this time. Furthermore, several photographs from this article (photos not included in the copied handouts that will be given to students) will have been posted on a bulletin board next to the blackboard. The class will start with the teacher asking students if they know what a quinceanera is and if any of them, or anybody they know, has had such a coming-of-age ceremony. After telling students they soon will read an article about a local girl’s quinceanera, the teacher will review the meaning of the vocabulary words listed on the blackboard. Next, after showing students the photos on the bulletin board, the teacher will distribute copies of the newspaper article (the copies also include other photos that ran with the article). With the