

NOTE: Please make sure you sign up for the computer lab for the following lessons: 4, 5, 9-11, 16, 18, 23, 24, 27-30, 34, 36- 38, 40, and 41.

TITLE OF LESSON

American Literature Unit 2 Lesson 1 – Mother Tongue
What does our language reveal about ourselves?

TIME ESTIMATE FOR THIS LESSON

One class period

ALIGNMENT WITH STANDARDS

California – Eng 11-12: R1.0-3, 2.0, 3.0-5, W1.0-5, W/O1.0-2, L/S1.0, 1.4, 1.6-8, 2.0-1

MATERIALS

Mother Tongue – Reading
Open Mind – Student Page

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- To tell autobiographical stories
- To reflect on instinctive ways we improve autobiographical stories
- To read *Mother Tongue*
- To draw connections between *Mother Tongue* and previous discussions regarding language
- To select a language topic to write about autobiographically

FOCUS AND MOTIVATE STUDENTS – WARM-UP ACTIVITY

- 1) **Daily Log** – Have students copy Daily Log below.
- 2) Sustained Silent Reading – Read for ten minutes. After silent reading, ask the students if any of their novels describe autobiographical incidents. Have them share examples, if they do.
- 3) Story Starter – Ask the students to reflect for a few moments about a time that they were embarrassed by something their parents said or did. After they have thought about this briefly, tell students to assemble in groups and choose one partner within the group. They will have two minutes to tell stories to each other. One person must volunteer to go first. They will have one minute to talk, then you will call “switch,” and the second person will tell their story. They should start off by saying, “I was so embarrassed when…” They must finish the sentence and tell a one-minute story about it.
- 4) Story Starter Revisited – After both partners have told, tell the students to change partners and repeat the activity.
- 5) Story Starter, One More Time – After both partners have told, tell the students to change partners again, so that they will have told the story to everyone in the group.

Date	Journal	Lecture Discussion	Activity	Readings	Homework
	1 – Expand a Story Starter (at least 1 full page)		1. Story Starters 2. Mother Tongue 3. Language Story Starters	<i>Mother Tongue</i>	Journal 1

ACTIVITIES – INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP

1. Reflection – Tell the students to think for a moment about the story starter exercise. How did their stories change from the first time they told it to the third time they told it? Call on students to explain some things they changed, and write these comments on the board. Tell the students to take notes on these strategies as well. Invariably, the students will have made changes, though they may need some reminders. Did they drop out certain details and exaggerate others? Why did they do this? Point out that they were responding to their natural instincts to make a story more interesting to an audience. They were able to observe what worked and what didn’t, and make changes almost automatically. This is

a skill that they should remember while they are writing autobiographical papers, which is something that they will be doing over the next few days.

2. Background – Tell the students that they are going to be reading an essay called *Mother Tongue*. Based on the title, what do they think the essay will be about? This is an autobiographical essay that explores Amy Tan’s conflicted feelings about her mother’s use of English. Tell the students to think again about their stories of embarrassment. Do they feel as embarrassed now about the incidents they described, or have their feelings changed with time?
3. **Open Mind** – Distribute the *Mother Tongue* reading and the **Open Mind** graphic organizer to each student. Remind the students that, even though we try to approach new texts with an open mind, we are always asking questions and drawing conclusions based on our previous reading. Tell them to read *Mother Tongue* in their groups. They may decide upon a way to read it (take turns reading aloud, read to partners, read silently). While they read, they should write down their thoughts in the spaces available in the **Open Mind**. There are eight “thought balloons” for them to record their thoughts. They should fill all of them. They may also use the space around the thought balloons to write more. Tell them that any thoughts related to the reading are acceptable. They may write questions that occur to them and words they don’t understand. They should also write at least two thoughts about how this essay connects to the ideas about language that they explored in the previous unit, such as the relationship between language and power, the idea that English is made up of many dialects, or the concept of “code-switching” (which is central to this essay, though not mentioned by that name). They should also write at least two “Story Starter” ideas. The Story Starters should be, like the warm-up activity, the beginnings of sentences. However, these Story Starters must relate to language (e.g. “My mother tongue is…” “I change the way I speak when…” “I wish I could speak another language because…”) and connect to the themes of the reading. They should work individually to fill in the **Open Mind**. Allow twenty minutes for this activity.
4. Thought Balloons – After the students have finished reading, tell them to discuss the reading in pairs. Each student should present one **Open Mind** question about the reading to his or her partner for discussion. (Tell them to save their story starters for a later activity). Allow a few minutes for the discussion of the reading questions. After the students have finished discussing, call on a few volunteers to introduce ideas and questions that they discussed. What connections did they make to discussions of language from the previous unit? Ask students what the theme/main ideas of the piece are.
5. Language Story Starters – Tell the students to present their story starters to the group and have the group pick out two favorites. Then call on a group to present a Story Starter. After they present it to the class, have the whole class use this Story Starter to do the storytelling activity with their partners (making sure to call “switch” so both partners get to tell). This time, they should only tell their stories once. Then call on the next group to introduce a Story Starter. Repeat until each group has presented one, then call on each group to present a second one, if there is time.
6. Review Homework – Tell the students that they will be practicing their autobiographical writing skills, which they have been using since freshman year. Tonight, they will select one of the Language Story Starters presented in class and write a journal entry based on the story. Tomorrow, they will review autobiographical writing and use the entry as a basis for a longer essay.

HOMEWORK

Journal 1 – Choose a Language Story Starter from class and write the story. Must be at least one page long.

GROUP ROLES

None

DOCUMENTATION FOR PORTFOLIO

Unit 1

Unit 2

Project 1: A True Story	None
Evaluation Essay 1	
Incident Poem	
Essay 2	
Essay 3: Satire	
Final Project: Flash Dictionary Chapter	
American Literature Unit 1 Final Exam	