


DIABLO VALLEY COLLEGE
Office of the President

DATE: October 2024

TO: Sabbatical Leave Committee

FROM: Susan Lamb 

SUBJECT: Sabbatical Leave Report – Jeannie Chiu

The following objectives and corresponding evidence were proposed in Jeannie Chiu's sabbatical leave application:

Objective 1: Compile a reader/workbook for ENGL 163 Asian American Literature.

Evidence: I will compile a reader including at least 10 selections of Asian American literature with introductions and reading and writing support and activities (at least 20 pages of original material). I will make a link to the reader available on the English Department Materials Canvas page.

Objective 2: Conduct research and write a report/article on the policy implications of expanding noncredit ESL course offerings at community colleges.

Evidence: I will write a report/article of at least 20 pages, or 5000 words, which will be submitted to the ESL and English programs. I may also submit the finished product to a journal or database such as ERIC for review.

I have reviewed the submitted evidence and attest she has met the specifications as outlined in her sabbatical application.

SECTION V. SABBATICAL LEAVE APPLICATION

Jeannie Chiu

1/5/2023

Name (Open Print Preview to have your name populate throughout the form)

Date

Diablo Valley College

Fall 2023

College

Sabbatical leave period requested

English, ESL

17

Teaching field(s)

Years of service in CCCC

Have you had previous Sabbaticals? If "yes" give time period(s) and activity (activities).

Yes. In Spring 2015 and Spring 2016, I completed a Teaching English as a Second Language Certificate from UC Berkeley Extension (institutional study). I also researched, wrote, and revised a 35-page scholarly article on the uncanny and racial and gender identity in the fiction of Nam Le, a Vietnamese Australian/American writer, and Kim Fu, a Chinese Canadian now living in the US (professional study).

Indicate type of Sabbatical program (see United Faculty Agreement, Section 12.5.6) If program can be categorized by more than one type, check where applicable.

- ☐ Institutional study (complete Form A)
- ☐ Travel (complete Form B)
- ☒ Professional Study and/or Creative Study (complete Form C)

GENERAL SUMMARY OF SABBATICAL PROGRAM

(GIVE A 100-WORD MAXIMUM STATEMENT)

This project includes two parts. First, I plan to produce a reader/workbook for ENGL 163 Asian American literature including selections, introductions, contexts, and material to support reading and writing at the college level. Research into Ethnic American literature and supporting reading and writing in the content areas will be valuable for other English courses and across disciplines, including the new Social Justice major. In a second project, I will write a report/article reviewing scholarly research and best practices at other colleges to find out about the advantages and challenges of the current expansion of noncredit offerings in our ESL program.

VALUE TO EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

(The Sabbatical Leave Committee will utilize this information as the basis for scoring Rubrics 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Describe how the proposed sabbatical will benefit the educational program. In particular:

1. *How will it benefit students, programs, or staff/colleagues?*

The Asian American literature reader will enhance the experience of students in my courses through updated and engaging materials, contextualization, and attention to guiding students through the reading and writing process. The reader will enhance the English literature program by providing a stronger grounding in Ethnic American literature for students and faculty. I will share my materials with colleagues through the English Department Materials Canvas page.

Research on noncredit courses can help clarify benefits and drawbacks of noncredit courses in terms of reaching a wider student population, funding, and the college mission of preparing students "for transfer to four-year colleges and universities, facilitating entrance to and advancement in careers, and fostering personal growth." Students can benefit from free courses to enhance their skills and to lead as a pathway towards career development, certificates, and transfer. The ESL program and faculty can learn from more research for decision-making and presenting their plans for growth.

2. *How will it enhance and/or improve your background and professional competence?*

I have a Ph.D. in literature and much of my dissertation, publications, and four-year college teaching experience has been in the area of Asian American literature. Creating an Asian American literature reader will help me to update my knowledge of works and approaches in the field, and also approaches to teaching reading and writing. In particular, this project can strengthen my expertise in supporting literacy at the college level.

For my previous sabbatical project, I completed a certificate in Teaching English as a Second Language from UC Berkeley Extension. Research into noncredit and ESL programs at community colleges will strengthen my knowledge of the field, students served, and my ability to help make program decisions.

3. *How will it relate to your ongoing professional assignment?*

As a full-time instructor, I teach English composition, literature, and ESL I also have participated on the department literature, composition, and ESL committees. There are currently two other professors in English with an expertise in Asian American literature, and one of them will be retiring soon. Further work on our Asian American literature course may also help forge more connections with the new Social Justice Major and Ethnic Studies requirement. Work for the Asian American reader on reading and writing support will also strengthen my teaching in other literature, composition, and ESL classes.

Recently, I led our internal program validation for the ESL program review, and it raised many questions for me about how the ESL program has expanded over the years. Research into

scholarly works and best practices for noncredit courses will help me to be more informed in my role as a teacher and as a department and committee member.

4. *How are the breadth and depth of the project appropriate for the sabbatical leave rather than the regular teaching year?*

As I teach a full load of courses in composition, ESL, and literature, participate in committees and department meetings, and take on additional time-consuming tasks like program review and hiring committees, I would not have time for the proposed in-depth projects during the regular teaching year. Normally, to prepare for a new course, I would identify readings, organize units and a daily plan, and prepare materials. I would not have time to write original introductions and carry out research into contexts and current developments in supporting reading and writing at the college level.

I carried out some preliminary research as I was leading a validation team for the ESL program review. However, in a normal semester, I would not have time to do extensive library and web research and interviews to better understand policy implications for teaching noncredit ESL courses at community colleges.

Name

PROPOSED OBJECTIVES AND EVIDENCE OF COMPLETION

(The Sabbatical Leave Committee will utilize this information as the basis for scoring Rubrics 5 and 6). Note that Rubric 6 regarding the "Proposed Evidence of Completion" is weighted twice that of all other rubrics.

Identify specific objectives and describe in detail the evidence that will accompany your report, which indicates that you have met each objective. The product of your approved sabbatical leave program will be subject to review by the Sabbatical Leave Committee at the time of making your final report. Examples follow:

Institutional study

Objective: 9 units of graduate level history courses as indicated on Form A will be taken at ... University.

Evidence: (Here you would describe the transcripts, class notes, exams, class projects, etc., you would submit as evidence of completing these units.)

Travel

Objective: Travel to archeological zones in Central America.

Evidence: (Here you would describe exactly what you plan to submit to document your sabbatical leave travel. You should specify the kinds of things you will present, like journals, artifacts, and slides, and you should give the committee an idea of the extent of the evidence by specifying the minimum number of slides, pages in a journal, number of museums, etc. If you so state, you must provide tangible evidence in your final sabbatical leave report that you have, in fact, written the minimum number of pages you proposed, visited the minimum number of archaeological zones you proposed, etc.)

Professional study and/or creative study

Objective: Compose a musical score or write a textbook.

Evidence: (Here you would clearly indicate the scope of the project, including the minimum number of pages you plan to write, approximate length, an outline of the contents, description of the complexity, etc.)

The Committee will rely on the information you provide in the evidence section to determine if you have met the contractual obligation of the leave.

Objective 1: Compile a reader/workbook for ENGL 163 Asian American Literature.

Evidence of completion: I will compile a reader including at least 10 selections of Asian American literature with introductions and reading and writing support and activities (at least 20 pages of original material). I will make a link to the reader available on the English Department Materials Canvas page.

Possible Project Outline:

I. Introduction to Asian American literature

A. Historical context

B. Reading and Writing About Literature

II. College Support for Reading

A. Annotating

B. Outlining

C. Close Reading

D. Vocabulary Building

E. Reading fluency

III. College Support for Writing

A. The Writing Process

1. Small-stakes writing
2. Prewriting
3. Thesis statement
4. Paragraphing
5. Integrating sources
6. MLA format
7. Beginnings and Endings

B. Writing about literature

1. Plot
2. Theme
3. Character
4. Setting
5. Point of View
6. Style
7. Symbolism

C. Critical approaches to literature, such as

1. Formalism
2. Historicism
3. Psychoanalytic criticism
4. Gender criticism
5. Postmodernism

IV. Reading selections with introductions and reading/writing activities

A. Genres: Poetry, essays, stories, novels, plays, myths, folktales, oral histories, other art and music

B. Historical immigration movements, such as

1. 19th century Chinese and Japanese
2. 1900-1940 South Asian and Chinese
3. 1941-1970 Filipino and Japanese
4. 1970-present Korean and Southeast Asian

C. Contexts for literary analysis such as

1. Aesthetic
2. Historical

3. Social such as

- i. identity
- ii. Acculturation
- iii. Family structure
- iv. Gender roles
- v. Rites of passage

4. Political

- i. Resistance
- ii. Organizing
- iii. Representation

Objective 2: Conduct research and write a report/article on the policy implications of expanding noncredit ESL course offerings at community colleges.

Evidence of completion: I will write a report/article of at least 20 pages, or 5000 words, which will be submitted to the ESL and English programs. I may also submit the finished product to a journal or database such as ERIC for review.

Possible Project Outline:

I. Introduction to Pros and Cons of noncredit ESL instruction in community colleges

II. Changing Demographics and the Rise of noncredit in ESL instruction

- A. History of Community College Mission
- B. Current demographic trends
- C. Rise or return of noncredit courses

III. Noncredit Advantages

- A. Free, noncredit instruction for diverse demographic
- B. Repeatable courses for skill development, lifelong learning, and vocational training
- C. Mirrored credit and noncredit courses give students a bridge from noncredit to credit courses

IV. Challenges of noncredit courses

- A. Funding disparities and recent changes
- B. Pay disparities
- C. CCSF fiscal problems
- D. Relation to AB 705
 - 1. Noncredit needed to fill gaps created by eliminating developmental programs
 - 2. Want to avoid diverting students from progress towards their goals.

V. Policy suggestions or directions for further study

Name of Institution

Place of Institution

Period of Attendance

**(Minimum 18 quarter units)*

**(Minimum 13.5 quarter units)*

**Neither continuing education units (CEUs) nor courses taken from unaccredited institutions will be considered as Institutional Study. Please see Professional Study Form C.*

If "Other," explain:

* A full load is considered to be 12 semester units of undergraduate work or 18 undergraduate quarter units, or 9 semester units of graduate work or 13.5 quarter units at an accredited college/university.

Name

TRAVEL Form B		
Plan: Itinerary <i>(The Sabbatical Leave Committee will utilize this information as the basis for scoring Rubric 7. Be sure that the purpose, duration, and schedule of your travel are clearly delineated.)</i>		
Place	Duration of Visit	Purpose

PROFESSIONAL STUDY AND/OR CREATIVE STUDY Form C

(The Sabbatical Leave Committee will utilize this information as the basis for scoring Rubric 7. Units completed at any unaccredited and/or international institutions will not be considered. Be sure the kind and scope of your study methods, resources, and activities are clearly delineated. Include an estimate of the time that will be spent engaged in various activities.)

The Asian American literature reader and the report on noncredit ESL classes will both involve substantial library and web research and interviews/field work as needed. Substantial time will also be dedicated to writing introductions and developing reading/writing activities for the reader, as well as obtaining any needed permissions. Time will also be required for writing the report on noncredit classes and preparing the sabbatical report.

Weeks 1-2: Identify existing Asian American Readers, syllabi, essays, works of literature, and materials on supporting literacy at the college level.

Week 3-4: Read materials and begin to make selections and develop organizational scheme.

Week 5: Begin writing introductions and reading/writing support materials.

Week 6: Identify existing research on the history of noncredit for ESL instruction at community colleges and recent changes. Identify 3 interviews to be done at DVC, with the Public Policy Research Institute of California, other community college(s), and/or at UC Berkeley College of Education.

Week 7-8: Begin writing introduction and background information and carry out field work. Meet with DVC ESL program to find out their data collection plans and discuss how to supplement it with class surveys and make data requests from the district, if needed.

Week 9: Learn about tools and protocols for carrying out education research and presenting educational research data. If needed, arrange 2 relevant surveys to be carried out in credit and noncredit classrooms.

Week 10: Identify and write about existing research on AB705 and the arguments for and against noncredit courses as a way of supplementing developmental needs.

Week 11-12: Identify research and resources, including two interviews with colleagues, on supporting reading and writing in the disciplines for the Asian American literature reader. Continue writing introductions and support materials for the reader.

Week 13: Extend research into newspaper articles, art, music, websites, anti-Asian violence, literary criticism, and political movements to add relevance to the literature. Incorporate selections into workbook materials.

Week 14: Continue writing on noncredit programs, including findings from field work.

Week 15: Work on getting any needed permissions for material to be included in the Asian American literature reader.

Week 16: Edit and rewrite documents.

Week 17: Format the documents. Prepare Sabbatical Leave Report. Post reader to English Department materials Canvas page and submit report on noncredit programs to English and ESL programs.



February 9, 2023

Dear Sabbatical Leave Committee,

It is my pleasure to provide a recommendation for Professor Jeannie Chiu's sabbatical proposal. Prof. Chiu and I have collaborated on various English projects and committees, including our department's Literature Committee. I firmly support Prof. Chiu's desire to produce an Asian American literature reader, especially considering how valuable and necessary ethnic literature lessons and texts are for our college community.

In the aftermath of both AB 705 and the massive shift to online learning during the pandemic, students of diverse backgrounds are eager to read and write at a college level, but many still struggle. In particular, our Asian and Asian American students often lack meaningful support due to the myth of the model minority. I have spoken to Asian American literature students about how critical it is to see themselves in the literature that they read, and how engaged they feel in their classes when this is the case. Students of all backgrounds often express that they had never read a single Asian American author until they came to DVC. I know Prof. Chiu's reader will help us support the growing critical consciousness of all students and our faculty as well.

I am proud to recommend Prof. Chiu's proposal, especially given my experiences and knowledge as a faculty member who has previously served as Co-Chair of the Literature Committee and Co-Convener of the Racial Justice Task Force, and as someone who is currently working with Professor Dani Cornejo on establishing an Asian American Studies course within our growing Ethnic Studies program. Please do not hesitate to contact me at lang@dvc.edu if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa Ang", written in a cursive style.

Lisa Ang
Professor of English

DVC

DIABLO VALLEY COLLEGE

February 8, 2023

Dear Sabbatical Committee:

With pleasure, I write this letter of support for the sabbatical proposal submitted by Jeannie Chiu. I have worked with Jeannie (actually, I was on her interview hiring committee) as an English Department colleague, focusing on our common interests of Asian American Literature and ESL Composition. We have had many conversations and have shared curriculum, pedagogy and ideas about these subjects, the joys and pains of teaching them to immigrants, second language speakers, English and Asian American Studies majors, and literature enthusiasts and the need for better textbooks and noncredit ESL offerings.

Jeannie's proposal to develop an Asian American Literature reader with workbook activities and the investigation of noncredit ESL courses will assist the students and college in a variety of ways. To begin, the reader will increase her knowledge and her expertise of Asian American works, approaches in the field, and approaches to the teaching of the study of it, which will assist her in the strengthening of supporting literacy at the college level. The workbook activities will help students gain an understanding of the works that expand the traditional literary canon. Also, the inquiry of noncredit ESL courses will help the ESL program develop and schedule more courses for nonnative speakers to develop their language acquisition while enabling the college to diversify its ESL course offerings, which will be of great value to the college. With these projects, the college can better serve our students, respond to developing needs in these disciplines, and provide more opportunities and tools for them to succeed. This work can fulfill a need for a stronger curriculum in Asian American Literature, and leadership around noncredit ESL courses. In addition, Jeannie's sabbatical research will be helpful to other literature offerings and programs at the college that are looking develop workbook activities to accompany course readers and to expand or develop noncredit offerings.

In conclusion, I support the proposed sabbatical project presented by Jeannie Chiu. This effort to increase greater understand of Asian American Literature for students through workbook activities and a greater understanding of noncredit offerings will be of great benefit to our students and the college community.

Sincerely,

Patrick Leong

Patrick Leong,
Professor, English/ESL
Diablo Valley College

10 February, 2023

To the Sabbatical Leave Committee:

Please accept this letter in support of Jeannie Chiu's sabbatical proposal for Fall 2023. Professor Chiu's proposal aims to support students in our English and ESL programs through two separate projects. Her first, the creation of a reader/workbook for ENGL-163 Asian American Literature, would provide a foundational resource for the class that would benefit instructors and students alike. Her second project, a report into best practices for building non-credit ESL programs, is directly relevant to the ongoing work of ESL faculty to further develop our own non-credit program.

In her years at Diablo Valley College, Professor Chiu has demonstrated her commitment to diversity in literature and composition by teaching not only ENGL-163, but also ENGL-122AL First Year Composition for Multilingual Students. Her familiarity with our native and non-native English-speaking student populations, combined with her expertise in Asian American literature, provides her with a strong knowledge foundation from which to create a high-caliber reader that is accessible and relevant to all students, and which will serve as a model for other English instructors seeking to create handbooks for other literature classes. Such a reader will contribute to college-wide efforts to promote racial equity in our classrooms, as the research into ethnic literature that its production will require, has the potential to inform text and topic selection in 122AL classes, as well as classes within the college's Social Justice major.

Professor Chiu's second project will support our nascent non-credit program, greatly informing the way we develop, promote and teach these classes. The research produced by this project will be invaluable in creating robust, pragmatic and cost-effective programming that serves two aims: improving access to transfer-level English for non-native English speaking students, and creating a pathway to other majors, especially those under Career and Technical Education. To succeed in our aims, we greatly need knowledge and expertise in collaborating with other departments to identify likely career pathways, understanding the varied needs of non-credit students, and improving non-credit student success rates. We need to understand how to create classes that both provide a gateway to college for new students, and support students currently enrolled in other majors across campus. Such knowledge requires a considerable time investment that we currently do not have, but that would fall under the scope of Professor Chiu's proposed project.



On a final note, I would like to share my own hopes for Professor Chiu's project. As a fellow instructor of 122AL, I personally look forward to making use of Jeannie's work to evolve my own teaching practices and discover texts with high relevance to our ethnically diverse 122AL students. Furthermore, Jeannie's non-credit research will be of immeasurable benefit to myself and other members of the ESL Committee, and ultimately across the entire college.

With kindest regards,

Laurie Sample

SECTION VI. SABBATICAL LEAVE REPORT

Jeannie Chiu

2/2/2024

Name (Open Print Preview to have your name populate throughout the form)

Date

Diablo Valley College

Fall 2023

College

Sabbatical leave period requested

English, ESL

Teaching field(s)

GENERAL SUMMARY OF COMPLETED SABBATICAL PROGRAM

(GIVE A 100-WORD MAXIMUM STATEMENT)

I completed a 46-page Asian American Literature Reader Workbook that is organized thematically and includes original introductions, discussion questions, and other reading/writing supports. I selected and provided links to ten recent and classic pieces from a range of genres, from poetry to the graphic novel.

I also finished a 32-page article on the history, context, and policy implications of expanding noncredit ESL programs at community colleges, including data and interviews from DVC, Laney College, and the Public Policy Institute of California, and additional considerations for expanding enrollment and raising student completion rates for students facing socioeconomic, linguistic, and other challenges.

VALUE TO EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Briefly reflect and highlight the value of your sabbatical leave to the educational program. In particular:

1. How will it benefit students, programs, or staff/colleagues?
2. How will it enhance and/or improve your professional competence?
3. How will it relate to your ongoing professional assignment?
4. How are the breadth and depth of the project appropriate for the sabbatical leave rather than the regular teaching year?

Include what you experienced and discovered during the process of completing your sabbatical.

1. I discovered and revisited a range of Asian American works which are playing an increasingly central role in American discourse, such as literature by authors who won or were finalists for the Pulitzer Prize--Cathy Park Hong, Viet Thanh Nguyen, and Hua Hsu. I engaged with these and lesser known works, creating discussion questions and activities, many of the latter drawn from a pedagogy textbook, Reading in the Content Areas. These resources should be useful in my teaching and for my colleagues as they prepare their courses in the English and ESL programs.

I learned a lot about the history, rationale for, and increased funding for noncredit courses, as well as other considerations for increasing student engagement and success in ESL and other programs. I now have a better sense of the diversity of ESL students and cultural capital and other differences they face, as well as the robust academic and financial supports they can benefit from in California.

2. I was able to update my knowledge of Asian American literature, ESL policies, and academic supports and student services for struggling students. In addition, doing research and writing in two different and unfamiliar citation styles (Chicago and APA) helps me relate to the writing process and how students may have difficulty keeping track of and correctly documenting their source materials. These projects gave me the opportunity to conduct research, write, design activities for better reading comprehension, and investigate the challenges facing ESL and first-year students and how to better support them.

3. My research and writing on this project provides me with a larger toolbox for incorporating Asian American literature and reading/writing strategies into my composition, literature, and ESL courses. I also feel that I gained a better grasp of the rationale for, potential of, and possible limitations of AB 705 and the development of noncredit programs, as well as future actions we could take in ESL and English, such as capping noncredit enrollment if needed; bolstering access to student services, financial aid, academic support, and basic needs for students of all residency statuses; and providing further opportunities for students to get credit and progress towards degree completion while improving their language skills.

4. I appreciated the opportunity to do research and field work, which I would not have time for during a regular semester spent teaching, attending meetings, and doing other work for the department. In

particular, it was fruitful carrying out research at U.C. Berkeley and conducting interviews and exchanging informational emails with my colleagues Kelvyn Moran, Laurie Sample, Toni Fannin, and Ketih Mikolavich, Dorothy Wang of Williams College, Steve Zetlan from Laney College, and Olga Rodriguez at the Public Policy Institute of California. Special thanks to Lindsay Kong for providing college data, helping to refine my research request to the district, and organizing the data so that I could analyze various student characteristics.

PROPOSED OBJECTIVES AND EVIDENCE OF COMPLETION

Identify specific objectives proposed in your application and describe in detail the evidence that accompanies your report, which indicates that you have met each objective. If there are deviations, please explain. Examples follow:

Institutional study

Objective: 9 units graduate level history courses as indicated on Form A-1 will be taken at University.

Evidence: (Your statements of evidence should align with and be closely tied to the items listed in the original application. Any deviations from the original proposal must be approved in advance by following the modification procedure delineated in Human Resources Procedure 2040.01. All approved deviations from the original proposal must be outlined and explained in the final sabbatical leave report.)

Travel

Objective: Travel to archeological zones in Central America.

Evidence: (Here you describe exactly what you are submitting to document your sabbatical leave travel. Your statements of evidence should parallel the items listed in the original application. Any deviations from the original proposal must be approved in advance by following the modification procedure delineated in Human Resources Procedure 2040.01. All approved deviations from the original proposal must be outlined and explained in the final sabbatical leave report.)

Professional study and/or creative study

Objective: Compose a musical score or write a textbook.

Evidence: (The products of your study should be described and quantified to the extent possible. They should parallel the items listed in the original application. Any deviations from the original proposal must be approved in advance by following the modification procedure delineated in Human Resources Procedure 2040.01. All approved deviations from the original proposal must be outlined and explained in the final sabbatical leave report.)

Summary of Evidence

Objective as stated in proposal	Evidence as stated in proposal	Evidence provided in this report (Give page number, item in portfolio, video, etc.)
1. Compile a reader/workbook for ENGL 163 Asian American literature.	I will compile a reader including at least 10 selections of Asian American literature with introductions and reading and writing support and activities (at least 20 pages of original material). I will make a link to the reader available on the English Department Materials Canvas page.	I wrote a 46-page Asian American Literature Reader Workbook, including links to 10 selections. I was unable to include the entirety of all works addressed due to copyright issues, but I provided links to excerpts. I wrote introductions to each section and author, discussion questions, and activities to support reading and writing. See the table of contents on page 2 for an overview. I posted this reader workbook to the English Department Materials Canvas site.

2.	Conduct research and write a report/article on the policy implications of expanding noncredit ESL course offerings at community colleges.	I will write a report/article of at least 20 pages, or 5000 words, which will be submitted to the ESL and English programs. I may also submit the finished product to a journal or database such as ERIC for review.	I conducted research and wrote a 32-page report, "Considerations for Growth in Noncredit ESL Courses." I sent this to the English Department Chair and current and prior ESL Coordinators, as well as other interested ESL instructors. Dorian has invited me to present an overview of this research at an English Department meeting this spring.
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			

Name

INSTITUTIONAL STUDY
Form A-1

Name of Institution

Place of Institution

Period of Attendance

Units completed semester/quarter

One copy of your official transcript must be filed with this report

Name

TRAVEL Form B-1		
Give Itinerary:		
Place	Dates of Visit	Purposes Achieved

PROFESSIONAL STUDY AND/OR CREATIVE STUDY

Form C-1

Summarize the study methods, resources, activities and results. Quantify your summary wherever possible, listing pages written, scores composed, etc., as appropriate.

I began a review of Asian American literature at UC Berkeley's Main and Ethnic Studies libraries, as well as Oakland Public Library for recent books, and my collection of literature, literary criticism, and history books from graduate school. On recommendations for Asian American literature, I consulted Dorothy Wang, a Professor of American Studies at Williams College. I perused Asian American Readers, syllabi, and websites, as well as a course reader for prospective high school teachers from the teacher credentialing program at Cal State East Bay, "Content Area Reading: Literacy and Learning Across the Curriculum." Since I will be posting my reader/workbook on the DVC English Canvas page, I wanted to find out more about copyright issues. I joined the sessions and Canvas course on OER/ZTC (Open Education Resources/Zero Textbook Cost), and also consulted with librarian Lindsey Shively on OER materials for my reader, as well as how I could license my own reader with OER in the future so that the resource can be widely available. While I have not yet applied for the OER grant, I did list my upcoming courses as ZTC, and consulted with my colleagues Toni Fannin and Keith Mikolavich on their materials and approaches to supporting reading and writing at the college level. I did not end up using many OER materials other than historical resources from the web, but I was able to find print poems and stories available on the internet and excerpts from book-length works. I read and selected literature and organized the works under three broad categories, Identity, History, and Creativity. In my 46-page reader, I include ten recent and "classic" pieces from a range of genres: poetry, essays, stories, memoirs, myths, folktales, oral histories, and graphic novel, including a range of Asian American experiences, historical time periods (early immigration and detention, Japanese American internment, and post-Vietnam War), and ethnicities, such as Chinese, Japanese, Filipino/Egyptian, Vietnamese, and Korean. It was also a learning experience to incorporate a range of reading and pedagogical activities, such as new media literacy, cultural diversity, cooperative learning, story impressions, questioning the author (QTA) while reading, and graphic organizers. Documenting sources for both projects using Chicago and APA style also took considerable time and helps me sympathize with my writing students when they need to compile and document sources for research papers.

To find out more about noncredit ESL courses at community colleges, I did research through UC Berkeley library, the DVC library databases, and on the internet. I also interviewed our current and past coordinators of the ESL Program, Kelvyn Moran and Laurie Sample, the ESOL Department Chair at Laney College Steve Zetlan, and Olga Rodriguez, Director of the Public Policy Institute of California Higher Education Center and lead author on PPIC reports on ESL in California Community Colleges. I created surveys for mirrored ESL classes that included noncredit and credit students and made a research request through the DVC home page to find out which sections to target. I met with Lindsay Kong, Dean of Institutional Effectiveness and Accreditation, on clarifying my research goals, and she compiled available data, made a data request to the district, and configured the resulting data so that I could analyze various student characteristics. I also attended an English Department presentation on department data, led by Marcos Garcia and Dorian Eidhin. I sent requests to two ESL instructors to do a survey in their classrooms, but I did not hear back from them, and I decided not to do surveys because the ESL program will be conducting their own research and interviews on the noncredit program this year. I also exchanged emails with Sachiko Oates, co-author of an ASCCC powerpoint on mirrored courses, Kim Novak from DVC Admissions and Records, Nikki

Moultrie from the Instruction office, and Armany Elmasry, a Curriculum and System Technology Analyst from Peralta Colleges, to find out more information about mirrored courses, residency categories, and alternatives to Positive Attendance hours for noncredit courses.

For my 32-page report on noncredit ESL classes, I found that community colleges and adult schools share responsibility for teaching adult ESL, and noncredit is widely seen as appropriate for pretransfer-level courses. In 2005-2006, per student funding for noncredit was under half of the funding for credit courses, but funding was largely equalized to the credit level for Career Development and College Preparation noncredit courses in 2015-2016. However, as I found out at our recent All College Day, under the Student Centered Funding Formula, noncredit students are still funded less than credit students, and underrepresented students are funded at a higher rate than credit students: the base allocation per full time equivalent student is \$5300 for credit students, \$4451 for noncredit students, and \$7400 for dual enrolled high school students and formerly incarcerated students. In addition, City College of San Francisco has the largest noncredit program in the state, but has faced accreditation and financial difficulties and is still making major cuts to staffing and programs. There are problems with Federal Data on higher education leaving out noncredit students and federal financial aid not being available to noncredit students. While in 2012, adult schools educated a larger portion of ESL students than did community colleges, a few years before the pandemic, Laney College found itself having to develop their Basic English program because the local adult school had temporarily disappeared. Their 4-level Basic English program and 4-level Academic English program with mirrored courses has been expanding, but the department decided to cap noncredit enrollment in mirrored courses at 5 out of 30 for reading and writing courses and 10 out of 35 for grammar courses because there was high attrition for noncredit students, who need further orientation on the rigors of the Academic English program, as well as the academic supports, financial aid, residency support, and basic needs resources that can help them towards program completion.

Preliminary data on the growing DVC noncredit program shows lower success rates for noncredit students in mirrored courses, though this may be skewed lower by the fact that non-attending noncredit students may not be removed from the roster at census because they are not tracked by census. I also found that more nonresidents were enrolling as noncredit students, which suggests they need more information on registering for college and the resources available to them. Becker's article also highlights the role of cultural capital, where students come from different backgrounds and have different knowledge of how to access resources and a different sense of their ability to succeed academically in relation to other students. My takeaway from meeting with Rodriguez of the Public Policy Institute of California is the importance of courses counting towards the degree, and the range of resources in California which should make attending college financially similar to having a minimum wage job. While additional noncredit courses could serve as a work-around from the intention of AB 705 to streamline student access to transfer-level courses, mirrored sequence noncredit offerings can expand access to students, enable them to try out courses, give them time to find out more about the college support resources available to them, and also allow them to save their financial aid eligibility for higher level coursework.

Asian American Literature: A Reader Workbook

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Identity

Who are we? This is a question grappled with by individuals everywhere, but especially young people. This can be a more fraught question for people who find themselves on the margins, such as those of non-dominant races, gender identity or sexuality, those with disabilities, and more recent immigrants in the US.

Who we are changes throughout our lives. Having grown up on the East Coast as one of only a few people of Asian descent in my school, I was often made aware of my racial difference. I found affinity with others marginalized by race, class, or religion, but it didn't occur to me that my identity was something to organize around until college. The term "Asian American" came about through student activism as part of the establishment of Ethnic Studies in the 1960s, particularly at San Francisco State University.¹ There are thus parallels in the rise of Asian American identity and Civil Rights, Native American, and Chicano movements.² Asian American activism was solidified by such injustices as the killing of Vincent Chin in 1982 by auto workers; the perpetrators received no jail time.³ Asian Americans are a diverse group that share in common with other racial minorities and immigrant groups experiences of displacement, cultural in-between-ness, and discrimination. Recent scapegoating of Asian Americans due to the Coronavirus and a negative turn in China-US relations illustrates the cyclical nature of geopolitical events that exert pressure upon individuals in Asian American communities.

¹ Sau-ling Cynthia Wong, *Reading Asian American Literature: From Necessity to Extravagance* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 3.

² *The American Yawp: A Massively Collaborative Open U.S. History Textbook*, vol. II (Stanford University Press), Chapter VII "Beyond Civil Rights."

³ Sucheng Chan, *Asian Americans: An Interpretive History* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1991), 177.

Extending from the emphasis on race and the immigrant or second-generation experience of injustices, Asian American literature includes a wide variety of “cross-generational concerns and styles.”⁴ Being “between worlds” is something many of us grapple with as a result of culture and other factors, including finding our place in the world.

.....

Mindful Reading and Metacognition (reader)

We hear a lot about the health benefits of mindfulness, and this is also an important component of effective reading. Mindfulness is a type of meditation that involves being fully present and observant of what you are encountering, whether that be your thoughts and emotions or the text in front of you.⁵ An apt metaphor for mindfulness is watching your emotions as if they are sand particles falling through water. An open and respectful attitude means that we will be patient and take in information first before reacting. Metacognition, “thinking about thinking,” involves considering the strategies that will help us to perform our tasks more effectively. Mindfulness, a stepping back to observe, can make our reading more evidence-based. Previewing before reading can give us an idea of who and what we are dealing with, and generate questions and connections of why this text is relevant to us.

.....

Before reading “How I Got That Name”:

1. Why are names important? What is the significance of your name?

⁴ Shirley Geok-lin Lim, *Asian American Literature: An Anthology* (Chicago: McGraw-Hill, 2000), xix.

⁵ Mayo Clinic, “Mindfulness Exercises,” <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/consumer-health/in-depth/mindfulness-exercises/art-20046356#:~:text=Mindfulness%20is%20a%20type%20of,mind%20and%20help%20reduce%20stress>

2. Survey key features of the upcoming text, such as the headnote, picture, and first and last lines. What do you think this poem will be about?

“How I Got That Name”

Marilyn Chin was born in Hong Kong in 1955 and grew up in Portland, Oregon. She received a BA from the University of Massachusetts and an MFA from the University of Iowa. She is the author of five collections of poetry, and has received numerous awards for her poetry, such as two National Endowment for the Arts fellowships. She has taught at the Iowa Writers’ Workshop and is Professor Emerita (retired) at San Diego State University.⁶

vocabulary:

assimilation

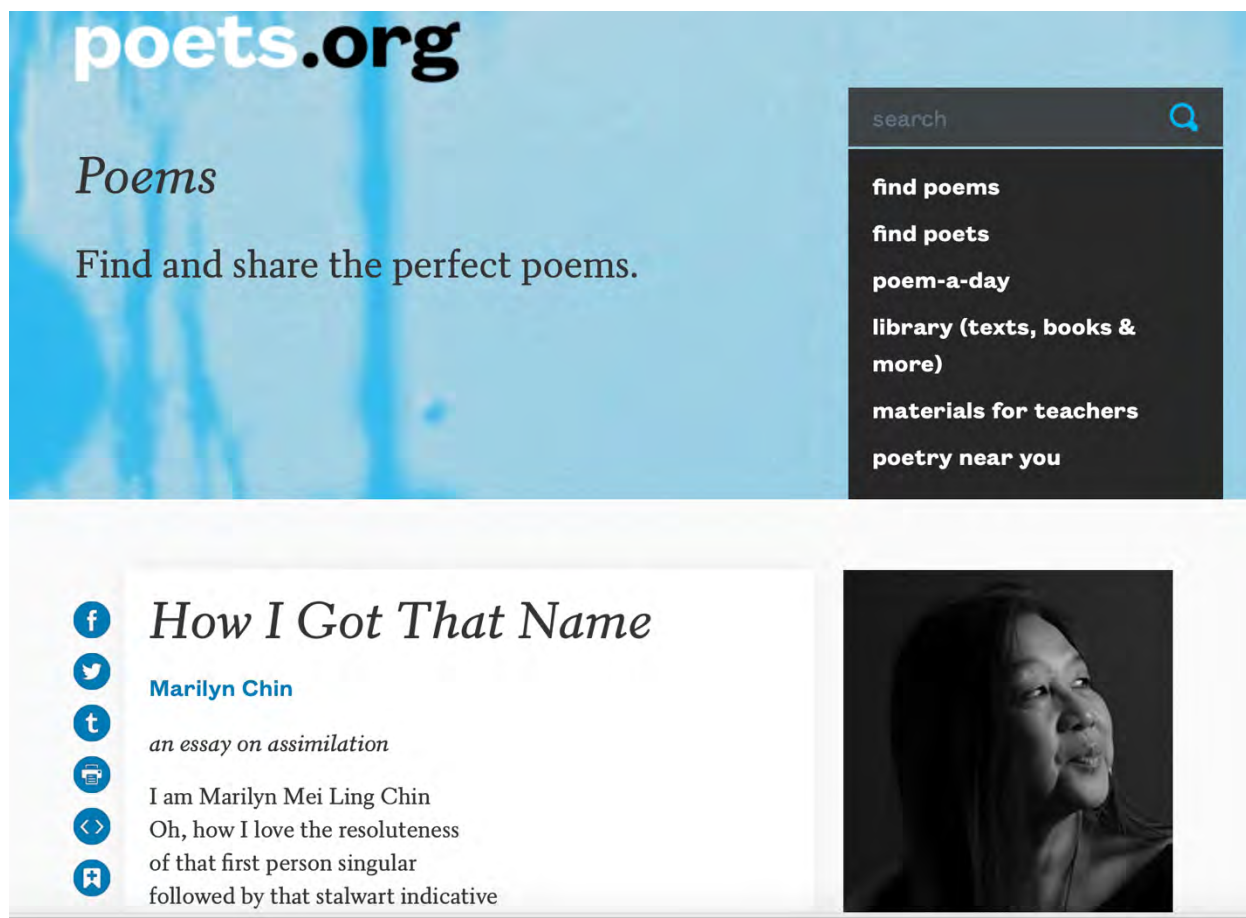
stalwart

paper son

filial piety

Model Minority

⁶ Poetry Foundation, “Marilyn Chin,” <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/marilyn-chin>



poets.org

Poems

Find and share the perfect poems.

search


- find poems
- find poets
- poem-a-day
- library (texts, books & more)
- materials for teachers
- poetry near you

How I Got That Name

Marilyn Chin

an essay on assimilation

I am Marilyn Mei Ling Chin
Oh, how I love the resoluteness
of that first person singular
followed by that stalwart indicative



[Read the complete poem⁷](#)

Joining the Conversation

1. Assimilation is the process by which immigrants and their offspring take on traits of the dominant culture. A problem with earlier scholarship on American minorities is the implication that their cultures were aberrant in the American context and that to “become ‘normal,’ they must shed their ‘dysfunctional’ cultures in order to assimilate into the majority Anglo-American one.”⁸ Where do we see assimilation in Chin’s poem? What may be the significance of her

⁷ Poets.org, “How I Got That Name,” <https://poets.org/poem/how-i-got-name>.

⁸ Sucheng Chan, *Asian Americans: An Interpretive History* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1991), xiii.

remaining “[s]olid as wood” even after being swallowed by a white whale? Why at the end of the poem is she “mesmerized / by all that was lavished upon her / and all that was taken away!”

2. What is Chin’s tone in the poem, her style or manner of expression, including the emotions expressed?⁹ Give examples from the text that illustrate her tone. What factors influence her tone? How might the information conveyed in the poem be expressed differently. Why might the voice of the poem have a mocking, ironic, and stalwart (tough) edge?
3. Chin refers to her father as a paperson and mentions that their family name had been changed “somewhere between Angel Island and the sea.” The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 barred immigrants of Chinese descent from becoming citizens, so some of those arriving on the Angel Island Immigration Station used false identity papers showing their relationship to a citizen to gain entry to the US. Arrivals were interrogated about details of their purported family or residence to weed out false claims.¹⁰ How might this history of exclusion and adaptation affect Chin’s portrayal of her father?
4. The Model Minority myth portrays Asian Americans as studious, law-abiding, and good at school and math. What are the downsides of this stereotype? Why does Chin lament, “We have no inner resources!” (stanza 2)
5. The poem includes many references to popular culture and literature, such as Marilyn Monroe, Gucci, the show *Santa Barbara*, the poem “The Red Wheelbarrow,” *Godzilla*, and *Moby-Dick*. Do research or explain one or more of

⁹ Merriam-Webster, “tone,” <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/tone>.

¹⁰ Y. Wu, “Chinese Exclusion Act,” Encyclopedia Britannica, October 16, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Chinese-Exclusion-Act>.

these references and how it adds meaning to Chin's poem. Why are both high (literary) and low (popular) culture relevant to her story?

6. The last stanza shifts point of view from first person to third person. Why? What are the conventions of a eulogy, and how does this stanza follow or flout those conventions of how a eulogy is usually written?

.....

The Writing Process

Writing can be rewarding and daunting. Giving yourself time can take the pressure off and help you to focus each stage of the process. Writing is recursive, which means you may come back to engage in different parts of the process at different times. For example, once you begin writing your draft, you will often come up with new ideas or find that you need to do more reading and research. It's usually not a good idea to put off writing because you're not completely sure what you want to say. You will get more ideas in the process and have a chance to continue to reshape your writing.

For the writing process, the first step is **discovery**, which can include prewriting, discussion, class lectures, and otherwise engaging with the text and material, finding out what is interesting about it, and generating your ideas and perspectives about it. Before you begin reading or writing, take time to connect with what you know already, absorb the information, and consider what you want to say and what approach you will take to writing it.

Drafting is getting your ideas down on paper in a coherent manner, with your audience in mind. If you have taken notes on ideas and examples in the discovery stage and sketched out an outline of the essay structure, this will make it easier to find

direction as you write. A draft is not your final version, so don't feel too much pressure to get it right the first time.

Revising is where you work on getting your writing into shape. Be willing to make changes, such as cutting parts out or changing direction if necessary. Reread and use feedback from your instructor, peers, and free campus tutoring to get perspective on what is and isn't working. You may want to save copies of your work as different version numbers if you want to have the chance to go back and undo changes that you made. Our next author, Jhumpa Lahiri, discusses the mystery of the writing process, how her creative writing came out of a sense of isolation, and the painstaking process of revising hundreds of drafts through acknowledging and trying to correct what is failing at each point.

[View Jhumpa Lahiri on her writing process](#) ¹¹

The **product** is your final version which reflects your unique perspective, the research you have brought together, and your way of expressing your analysis.

Publishing your final work for others besides the instructor, such as through class presentations or publications, can give you a larger sense of audience and connect your work to the larger world.¹² Lahiri found solace in her readers' connection to the experiences she thought growing up that nobody else might share.

- What is your writing process? Where do you get stuck? After reading and viewing the above, what ideas do you have for getting unstuck?

¹¹ *The New Yorker*, "At Home with Jhumpa Lahiri," YouTube Video (September 26, 2013), https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&sca_esv=573847129&rls=en&q=jhumpa+lahiri&tbm=vid&source=lnms&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiayd60mfuBAxWfATQIHx5nAC8Q0pQJegQIDBAB&biw=1202&bih=757&dpr=2#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:d6640671,vid:bru9oipYg18,st:0.

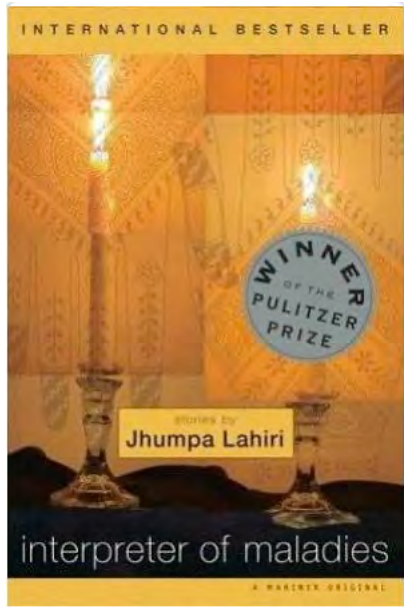
¹² Richard T. Vacca et. al., *Content Area Reading: Literacy and Learning Across the Curriculum*, 12th edition (Pearson 2017), 267-269.



“Interpreter of Maladies”

Jhumpa Lahiri was born in London and raised in Rhode Island. She has a BA in English literature from Barnard College, MA degrees in English, creative writing, and comparative literature, and a Ph.D. degree in Renaissance Studies from Boston University. Her works include her first collection of published stories, *Interpreter of Maladies*, winner of the Pulitzer Prize for fiction, and subsequent novels and collections of short stories, *The Namesake*, *Unaccustomed Earth*, and *The Lowland*. She also published books in Italian, *In alter parole* (In Other Words) and *Dove mi trovo* (Whereabouts).¹³

¹³ *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* editors, “Jhumpa Lahiri,” October 27, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Jhumpa-Lahiri>



[Read “Interpreter of Maladies” here](#) ¹⁴

Joining the Conversation

1. As a South Asian American raised in the US, Lahiri is very interested in questions of translation, from a language and culture point of view. The title of this story, “Interpreter of Maladies,” is the title Lahiri chose for the overall story collection. What do you think the title means and what do you predict the story will be about?
2. In what sense is Mr. Kapasi an interpreter of maladies? Why might Mrs. Das find this concept “romantic” (17)? How does Mr. Kapasi react to the malady that Mrs. Das reveals to him? What issues does he observe about the Das family as well as his own?

¹⁴ Jhumpa Lahiri, “Interpreter of Maladies,” <https://iblit2013.files.wordpress.com/2013/08/lahiri-interpreter-of-maladies-full-text.pdf>.

3. The act of translation can be more than a mechanical mapping of one language onto another. Growing up as the child of immigrants, Lahiri observed and “determined to bridge” the different linguistic and cultural worlds of her Bengali parents and their life in America. In her book of essays, *Translating Myself and Others*, Lahiri asserts, “To translate is to look into a mirror and see someone other than oneself.” Lahiri now sees Rome as her primary home and has begun writing in Italian: “I write in Italian to feel free.” How has Lahiri served as an interpreter of different cultural experiences?¹⁵ What might Lahiri and her character Mr. Kapasi gain while serving as interpreters?
4. Mr. Kapasi compares his sense of infatuation with Mrs. Das to the breakthrough when he would be able to understand words in a foreign language, after months of relying on a dictionary (21). How does Mr. Kapasi’s view of Mrs. Das change throughout the story? What does this suggest about the promise of connection to others?
5. The collection *Interpreter of Maladies* includes stories of second-generation Indian Americans, Indians in India, the immigrant generation, and friends of Indian Americans. In this story, how does the Indian interpreter shed light on the maladies of second-generation Indian Americans?

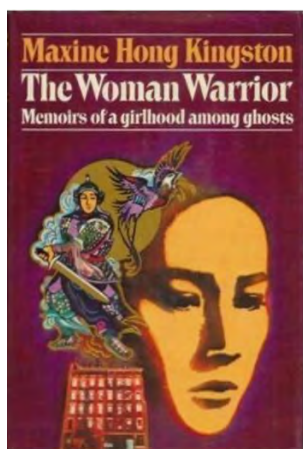
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“White Tigers” from *The Woman Warrior* (1976)

Maxine Hong Kingston was born in Stockton, CA in 1940, the oldest of six children of immigrant parents. Her father was a scholar but could only find work opening a

¹⁵ Benjamin Moser, “*Translating Myself and Others* by Jhumpa Lahiri,” *The New York Times* (May 17, 2022), <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/17/books/review/translating-myself-and-others-jhumpa-lahiri.html>.

laundry in the United States when he came to New York City in 1924. Kingston attended UC Berkeley, and she and her husband taught high school in Hayward and then moved to Hawaii for 10 years. Kingston later taught at UC Berkeley. Her works include *The Woman Warrior* (from which this chapter is taken, and which won the National Book Critics Award for nonfiction), *China Men*, and *Tripmaster Monkey*.¹⁶ *The Woman Warrior* combines autobiography, family history, myth, folktales, and fantasy, and is a groundbreaking work of feminism and Asian American literature.



[Read the beginning of “White Tigers” here¹⁷](#)

Joining the Conversation

1. Throughout this chapter, Kingston interweaves Chinese mythology with her own bicultural struggles: “When we Chinese girls listened to the adults talk-story, we learned that we failed if we grew up to be but wives or slaves. We could be heroines, swordswomen” (19). Their culture at once binds them with open discrimination against girls and inspires them with high expectations. Have

¹⁶ *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* Editors, “Maxine Hong Kingston,” *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, October 23, 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Maxine-Hong-Kingston>.

¹⁷ Amazon, “*The Woman Warrior*,” <https://www.amazon.com/Woman-Warrior-Memoirs-Girlhood-International-ebook/dp/B004089I10?asin=B004089I10&revisionId=b893a3b5&format=1&depth=3>.

you faced such contradictions in your family? How would you reconcile this tension in the legend of Fa Mulan and in Kingston's life?

2. Fa Mulan resonates with a cross-cultural phenomenon of the hero's adventure and the superhero, or heroine. What role do stories of discipline, bravery and fantastical powers against evil play for society and individuals?
3. Why has Kingston's "American life. . . been such a disappointment," despite her strait A's (45)? What role does "reporting" (53) have on how Kingston strives to become more like the swordswoman?

New/Old Literacies

Along with traditional texts, a variety of sources are now available on the internet. How should we evaluate and integrate these sources, and present our own work within a changing media landscape? Combining the old and the new, archival works are now more easily accessible on the internet. The Digital Public Library of America presents [archival and multimedia sources](#) that pair with *The Woman Warrior*. Browse through the source set and additional sources.

How do we evaluate the wealth of information that is available on the internet?

Here are some guidelines:

Bias and stance

1. All websites have a bias and stance, but some are more credible than others.

Looking up organizations on *Wikipedia* is likely to give a more balanced view of them, though keep in mind that anyone can edit *Wikipedia* entries. However, editors do need to provide links to other published sources to back up their claims.

2. Find the author of the website and find information on them.

Reliability

1. Investigate multiple sources to double-check information, especially information that is surprising.
2. Is the site commercial? Might the information be biased because they have an interest in selling you something?
3. Is the author authoritative (a professor, part of a known organization, etc.)?
4. Does the author include links to other reliable websites?
5. Does the URL seem like it is credible? If it has a ~, it may just be a personal page, so not as credible as an official .org or .edu website.

Synthesis Information

1. Consider how the information relates to your task as well as the broader context for the information.
2. Make sure to take note of where you found information and cite your sources (text).

4. Using criteria above,¹⁸ investigate the Digital Public Library of America website.¹⁹
Does this website seem credible? Biased or fair? Why or why not?
5. How do the images of foot binding from the early 1900s shed light on Kingston's rage and cultural contexts? Do more research into the history of footbinding.
6. How do the traditional Chinese images and performances depicting folk warriors underpin martial arts movies and Kingston's illustration of the solitary journey of the woman warrior?
7. Review images of Kingston, early Chinese families, and refugee and immigrant families. How does this relate to your own experiences of family? Look into the historical context of Chinese refugee status, political activism, and historical events in China and in US-Chinese relations. How do international events continue to effect Chinese immigrants and other ethnic or immigrant groups?

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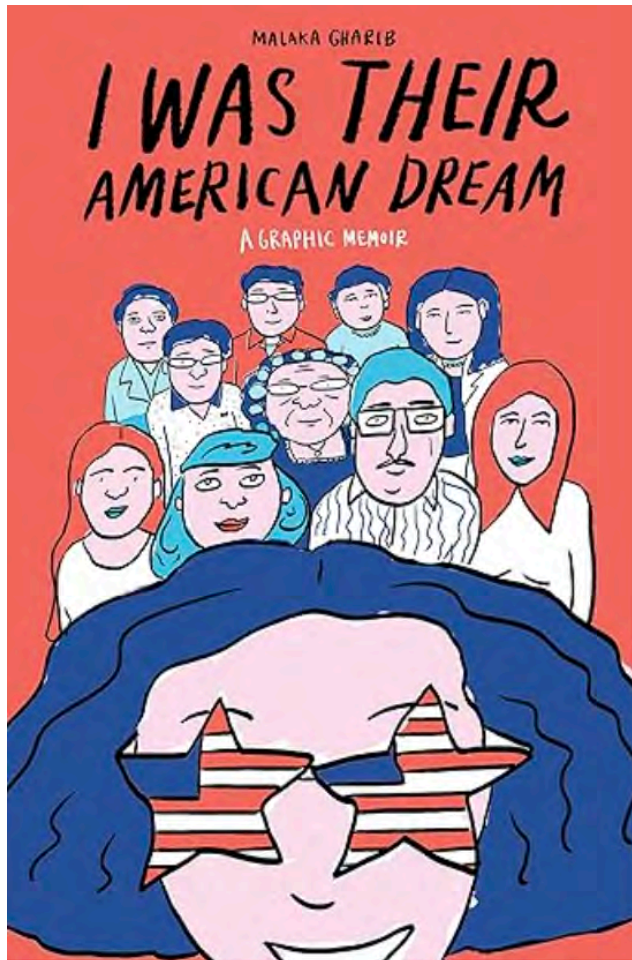
I Was Their American Dream

Malaka Gharib is an artist and journalist for National Public Radio. She works as a digital editor for NPR's *Life Kit* podcast, which covers life skills, health, parenting, and more. She grew up in Cerritos in Southern California with her mother and family from the Philippines and spent her summers in Egypt with her father, and attended Syracuse University. She now lives in Nashville, Tennessee.²⁰

¹⁸ Richard T. Vacca et. al., *Content Area Reading: Literacy and Learning Across the Curriculum*, 12th edition (Pearson 2017), 36.

¹⁹ Digital Public Library of America, "*The Woman Warrior* by Maxine Hong Kingston," <https://dp.la/primary-source-sets/the-woman-warrior-by-maxine-hong-kingston#tabs>.

²⁰ "Malaka Gharib," <https://www.malakagharib.com/>.



[Read a sample](#)²¹

Joining the Conversation

1. Gharib starts her graphic memoir with her mother telling her, “You have to be better than us” (Chapter 1). What does her mother mean, and how does this expectation shape Gharib’s roles and choices in life?
2. What were Gharib’s parents’ different reasons for coming to the US? How did this affect their view of the American Dream, as well as Gharib’s view?

²¹ Amazon, “*I Was Their American Dream*,” <https://www.amazon.com/Was-Their-American-Dream-Graphic/dp/0525575111>.

3. How do the needs of her parents shape Gharib's identity? How did she negotiate their different cultures, codes of conduct, and religions?
4. What did Gharib learn about being Egyptian and American from her summers in Egypt? How did vacationing within hearing distance of fighting between Palestinians and Israelis impact her or the reader?
5. What was it like for Gharib going to a very diverse high school in Southern California? What were social challenges since she is mixed race, and how was she able to fit in socially?
6. What was Gharib's cultural experience going to a mostly white school in New York State? What did she learn about mainstream culture and lack of acceptance of her culture?
7. At her first job, what does Gharib find challenging about fitting into a white-dominated workplace culture?
8. Though Gharib's husband is white, he embodies a Filipino trait called "Mabait" of being kind, respecting elders, and being easy to get along with (Chapter 6). What does Gharib's unique experience of different cultures show about the role of culture in conflicts and identifications?
9. How can Gharib remain close to her family although she moved far away? What are the trade-offs for people moving far from where they grew up?
10. How is Gharib's cultural background important to pass on to her children even though she might not be able to translate Arabic or local Egyptian customs to them? Why will it be important for the next generation to know that "all this is a part of them, too" (end)?

Cultural Diversity

Culture, language, community, and relationships are intertwined. When we read and write, we draw upon our own cultural and educational background, and we also become aware of different cultural norms and linguistic expectations. The term code-switching means changing between different varieties of language, and could also be applied to the conventions of different cultures. Where do you see Gharib code-switching in different situations? How does Gharib navigate her different cultures and academic and work environments to belong and to be successful? How does she express her individuality within these contexts? (textbook)

What are some of the different cultures you interact with, and how do people express themselves in these different settings? Why is it important to adapt sometimes to the norms in these settings? What are the costs of code switching, and how can we make this less burdensome?

22

II History

Literature and history can illuminate each other with attention to texts that grow out of historical events, such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, and the Vietnam War. We can better understand our society and culture and learn from past injustices, conflicts, and human responses.

²² Richard T. Vacca et. al., *Content Area Reading: Literacy and Learning Across the Curriculum*, 12th edition (Pearson 2017), 65-67.

Historical understanding and empathy come with crushing individual experiences and the possibility for hope, acceptance, and resilience. We can better understand cultural differences in their contexts and identify what we have in common.

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Angel Island Poems

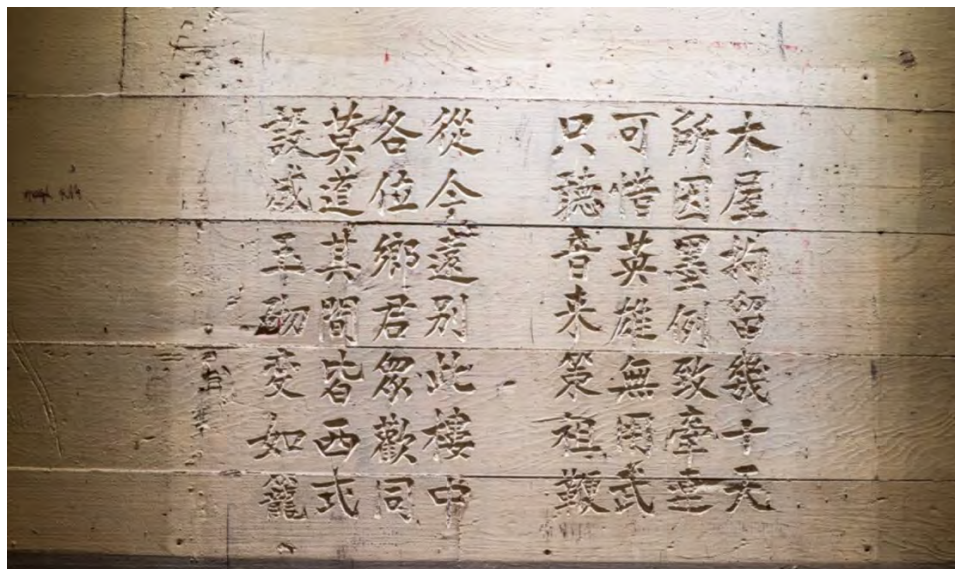
The Ellis Island of the West, Angel Island in San Francisco Bay housed an immigration and detention station from 1910 to 1940 which records how Asian immigrants were detained, a result of exclusionary laws. From the late 1800s, immigration from Europe surged. Usually European immigrants could be cleared through Ellis island in the matter of a few hours, while many Asian immigrants at Angel Island were detained for weeks or even years. In the 1800s, economic conditions in China and the European missionary, trading, and colonizing influences resulted in many of the men going abroad to work. Seeking job opportunities abroad, many Chinese from South China (such as Kingston's ancestors) were drawn to California after the 1850s because of the gold rush and economic boom.²³ This immigrant group in particular was targeted by special taxes on their professions, housing, and appearance, and in 1882 as a result of anti-Chinese scapegoating, the Chinese Exclusion Act was adopted by the US, barring the immigration of Chinese laborers for 10 years. This ushered in a period until 1924 when stricter immigration laws were passed against Asian immigrants, and European immigration was also reduced.²⁴

Taking advantage of the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire that destroyed many records, some Chinese in the US obtained false documents showing they were

²³ Harry H. L. Kitano and Roger Daniels, *Asian Americans: Emerging Minorities*, 2nd edition (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1995), 21.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 25.

Native born American citizens. Children that they then fathered in China would also be eligible to enter the US legally. Those who came to the US using false identity papers as “children” of these “citizens” were known as “paper sons.” As a response, arrivals at Angel Island were interrogated about details of their identities, a process that could take weeks, months, or even years if the applicants’ claims were denied and they appealed.²⁵ Some of those waiting in detention under difficult situations carved their thoughts as poems on the wooden walls of the barracks, which were brought to light by park ranger Alexander Weiss, who noticed the carvings in 1970 before the scheduled demolition of the buildings, contacted San Francisco State University professors, and set in motion community activism to save the historic site.²⁶



[View and read some of the poems here and more about the history.](https://www.aiisf.org/poems-and-inscriptions)²⁷

²⁵ Ibid., 33.

²⁶ Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation, “Writing on the Walls,” <https://www.aiisf.org/poems-and-inscriptions>.

²⁷ Ibid.

Also view this [online exhibition](#) of these voices from the past and modern poetic responses to the poems.²⁸

Joining the Conversation

1. Read through the poems collected in [“Voices of Resilience: Chinese Poetry.”](#)

What are some of the common emotions and themes expressed by the detainees?

What images, similes, and metaphors do they use? What historical references and classical influences do you see? How do they demonstrate resilience?

2. View the poems written by [the Sato/Bukowski/Haechler family](#) during the pandemic. How are these poems similar to and different from the Angel Island poems? Using their poems as a model, write your own pandemic poem to reflect on your experience of confinement and disruption.

²⁸ Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation, “Voices of Resilience: An online exhibition celebration the Immigration Station’s historic poetry and poems submitted by the public,” <https://www.aiisf.org/voicesofresilience>.

Close Reading (thanks to Professor Elizabeth Abel)

A close reading, or explication, seeks to confront the particular words, images, and organization of a literary passage. Close reading is a technique used to break up dense or complex ideas and language, or to draw attention to its individual parts, in order to make meaning clearer, and to better understand the relationship between the form of a passage and its content.

While you don't need to talk about every line in the passage--just choose those parts that seem important to you--you should address its main features and use quotes from the text to demonstrate and explore your interpretation. Close reading is an important tool for finding out new insights about a text and for interpreting details in your essays.

If you use close reading in your essay, you still need to have a coherent argument with transitions from one paragraph to the next. Don't merely organize an essay around the elements of close reading and be aware that you want to avoid unnecessary repetition.

1. Literal meaning: Concepts: What are the main ideas the passage/speaker is trying to get across?

2. Grammatical: Language: Is there anything striking about the sentence length and structures, the punctuation, or sentence parallelism? Are there subordinate clauses? Are the sentences simple or complex? Is there anaphora (repetition of the opening words of sentences)? Is the actual language and structure of the passage important to the way meaning is produced in the passage? Is the order in which ideas are presented important? How is the grammatical form of the passage related to its meaning?

3. Figures of speech: What sorts of similes or metaphors are used? What is their effect? eg.: metaphor (rose means love), simile (white like snow), antithesis (juxtaposition of opposites), personification, hyperbole (exaggeration)

4. Images and Themes: What sort of images occur in the passage? Images engage the reader's senses: not only sight, but also hearing, feeling, smell, touch, and memory. What larger themes are conveyed? (home, helplessness)

5. Context: How is the passage situated in the book, essay, or poem as a whole? What comes before and after it? Is it a turning point, a beginning, or an ending? How is this significant to our understanding of this passage?

6. Putting it all together: How does the overall explication reveal the author's strategies? How has going through the above five steps contributed to your understanding of what the author is trying to accomplish? Also, who is doing the talking and why? Is the speaker objective or biased?



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A close reading

1. Literal: To those who are here in detention, keep this in perspective, as great men such as Napoleon were also detained.
2. Grammatical: There is a form here, with two long sentences and two shorter sentences. Sentences are short as in an aphorism.
3. There is a metaphor of the flowing stream, which could represent time, one's larger life, or a more cosmic perspective where our troubles are like pebbles.
4. There is the image of the stream flowing and how we can let our problems pass, as well as the image of Napoleon imprisoned on an island despite his major conquests. The theme is resilience, being able to persevere despite obstacles.
5. The poem was carved into the wall at the Angel Island immigration station.
6. Putting this together, the writer seems educated, perhaps using a classical Chinese form and his knowledge of European history. He is thinking about his fellow detainees and how they can get above boredom and despair by seeing this ordeal in perspective.

²⁹ Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation, "Voices of Resilience: an online exhibit celebrating the immigration station's historic poetry and poems submitted by the public," <https://www.aiisf.org/vor-chinese-poetry>.

3. Choose one of the poems from [this website](#) and do a close reading.

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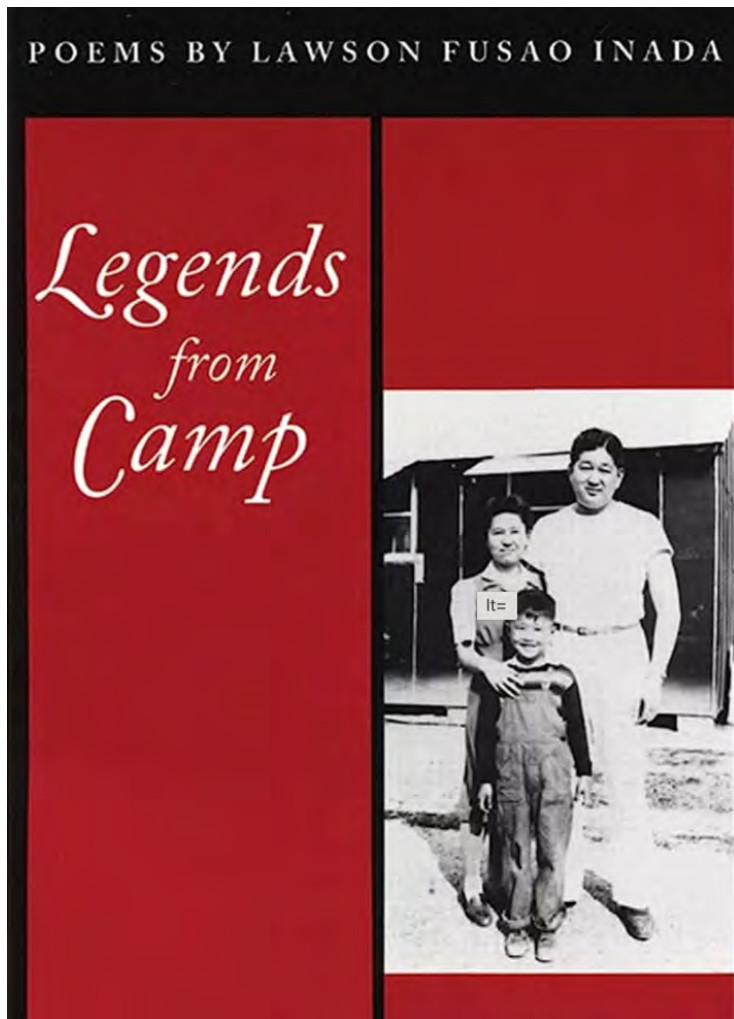
Legends from Camp

Lawson Fusao Inada was born in 1938 in Fresno, California, a third-generation Japanese American. In 1942 his family was sent to internment camps in Fresno, and then Arkansas and Colorado. Inada's works include *Before the War*, *Legends from Camp*, and an anthology about the Japanese internment experience, *Only What We Carry* (Poetry Foundation). Inada was the Poet Laureate of Oregon from 2006-2010 and received numerous awards, include a Guggenheim Fellowship in 2004.³⁰

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 which authorized civilians to be excluded from military zones, the West Coast. Around 112,000 Japanese Americans, nearly 70,000 of whom were citizens, were sent to internment camps, many of them losing all of their property and businesses when they had to leave their homes within as little as 48 hours. The US government under Ronald Reagan apologized and paid reparations of \$20,000 for each person interned in 1988.³¹

³⁰ Poetry Foundation, "Lawson Fusao Inada," <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/lawson-inada>.

³¹ National Archives, "Japanese-American Incarceration During World War II," <https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/japanese-relocation#background>.



[Read the complete poem here.](#)³²

Joining the Conversation

1. Lawson Inada, a poet and professor at Southern Oregon College, was born in Fresno and was interned as a child in Arkansas and Colorado. How would you describe the tone of his poems? Did anything surprise you about the tone?
2. Choose one of the sections from "Legends from Camp" and do a close reading of it.
3. Legend is defined as

³² National Park Service, "Legends from Camp," <https://home.nps.gov/tule/learn/historyculture/legends-from-camp.htm-+>.

Semihistorical narratives coming down from the past that recount the deeds of heroes, the movements of peoples, and the establishment of local customs. Legends are often told in a reminiscent manner as true happenings and are often associated with a geographic landmark, person, or event. According to Richard Dorson, "the legends of a given period. . . reflect the main concerns and values, tensions and anxieties, goals and drives of that period."³³

Why does Inada entitle his poem "Legends from Camp"? Look at the progression from fact to "a true story based on fact". . . with 'all the elements of fiction'" in the Prologue. Why does Inada choose to tell these stories as legends rather than as facts?

4. What is the significance of "The Legend of Lost Boy"? Why does Inada close this section with he "*thought* he was found" (emphasis mine)?
5. Why does the speaker note that Buddy the trickster and his uncle both disappeared?
6. How did the landscape and culture of the places the Japanese Americans were interned make an impression upon them? In this case, Inada was interned in Arkansas and Colorado.
7. Why does Inada devote sections to the legends of Groucho and Superman? Why do you think these figures were important to Inada as a child?
8. Why is home a legend and something only to imagine for the internees?
9. Why does the speaker say "Amache really was haunted. As it still is./ Amache was, is, are: Nightly, on television" ? Inada wrote Legends from Camp in 1993. What do you think he might be referring to when he suggests that Amache continues to exist out in today's world? How might

³³ Nancy Malone, *ENGL 170 World Mythology Course Materials*, Diablo Valley College.

this apply to what is going on today?

10. The poem ends,

All my belongings

are gathered.

All my connections

are scattered.

What's over the horizon?

What's left to abandon?

What's left to administer?

Will anyone ever need

another Camp Director?

What are the speaker's reflections upon being released from the camp? Does this surprise you at all? How might this be similar to being released from jail? Why does he pose the final questions?

9. Read one or more of the [letters from the Japanese internment](#) collected by the

Smithsonian.³⁴ How does this flesh out and add to Inada's sparse depiction of life in the camps?

10. Watch the 2004 film adaptation of [Legends from Camp](#) by Inada's son, Miles Inada. How

does the tone of the film differ from the original poem?³⁵ What does the depiction add

³⁴ Smithsonian Education, "Letters from the Japanese American Internment," https://smithsonianeducation.org/educators/lesson_plans/japanese_internment/slow_return.html

³⁵ National Park Service, "Legends from Camp," <https://home.nps.gov/tule/learn/historyculture/legends-from-camp.htm>

to our understanding of the camp experience for those who lived through it and their descendants?

Cooperative Learning

Students engage more with texts in socially interactive ways. Groups should be focused and purposeful.¹ Groups will be assigned a more substantive section of *Legends from Camp*. Use close reading techniques and research into the historical background to shed light on this section of the poem and connect it to our overall understanding of the experience of being interned in camps, and the significance today.

Group roles:

- Leader: facilitate the work of the group by reviewing instructions, checking on time, asking questions, etc.
- Reader: read the material aloud for the group
- Writer-recorder: Record responses from the group and check for accuracy
- Checker: Make sure the group is learning the material by asking questions.
- Encourager: Ask questions and give prompts to encourage all members of the group

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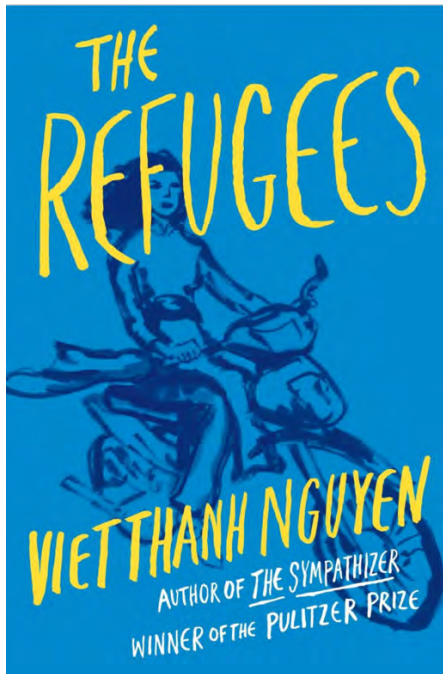
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 "War Years" from *The Refugees*³⁷

Viet Than Ngyuen was born in 1971 in Ban Mê Thuôt in South Vietnam and after the fall of Saigon in 1975, he and his family moved to the US. After being taken from his parents and living with a sponsor family for three years, Nguyen was able to reunite with his family at age seven

³⁶ Richard T. Vacca et. al., *Content Area Reading: Literacy and Learning Across the Curriculum*, 12th edition (Pearson 2017), 132-140.

³⁷ Viet Thanh Nguyen, *The Refugees* (New York: Grove Press, 2017).

and settle in San Jose, CA, where his parents opened a Vietnamese grocery store, one of the first of its kind in the area.³⁸ He attended UCLA, UC Riverside, and received his BA and Ph.D. degrees from UC Berkeley (where I knew him as part of the cohort of Asian Americanists). He is a professor at USC and is best known for his novel *The Sympathizer*, which won the Pulitzer Prize in 2016. The short story “War Years” was first published in the *TriQuarterly* in 2009-2010³⁹ and draws upon his family’s experiences with the Vietnamese American community in San Jose.⁴⁰



³⁸ Josh Koehn, “Viet Thanh Nguyen’s War Years” (May 24, 2017), <https://vietnguyen.info/2017/viet-thanh-nguyens-war-years>.

³⁹ “Viet Thanh Nguyen: Winner of the Pulitzer Prize,” <https://vietnguyen.info/author-viet-thanh-nguyen>.

⁴⁰ *Wikipedia* editors, “Viet Thanh Nguyen,” *Wikipedia*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Viet_Thanh_Nguyen.

Prereading: Creating Story Impressions

Based on clue words and phrases from the story, make a story impression of how you think the story will go.⁴¹

Story Chain	Story Prediction
New Saigon Market mother and father cash registers Mrs. Hoa collecting funds fight Communists hush money robbery followed extortionist tailor uniforms husband and sons alive good boy treat	

[Read the complete story here.](#)⁴²

Joining the Conversation

1. Compare your story account to the actual story.
2. Describe the narrator's mother. What surprised the narrator about his mother's behavior in regards to the encounters with Mrs. Hoa?
3. What does the attempted robbery show about the narrator's mother and his family's circumstances?

⁴¹ Richard T. Vacca et. al., *Content Area Reading: Literacy and Learning Across the Curriculum*, 12th edition (Pearson 2017), 156-157.

⁴² Nguyen, Viet Thanh, "War Years," *The Refugees*,
<https://blogs.baruch.cuny.edu/english2150cwrowesp17/files/2017/01/War-Years.pdf>

4. Why does visiting Mrs. Hoa in her home change the narrator's mother's mind about donating to her cause?
 5. Why is the story entitled "War Years"?
 6. The narrator is mainly an observer, but how does he participate in the story?
 7. As the child of immigrants, what lessons do his parents try to instill in him? How are his views and interests different from theirs?
 8. Why is the narrator surprised when his mother gives him money to buy a treat at 7-11? Why does he hesitate, "unable to choose" (72)? How is this different from many American children's experiences?
 9. Do research into the Vietnam War and its aftermath. How does this shed light into the experiences of the family and Vietnamese American community described in this story?
-

III. Creativity

In this section, we take a look at the role of art and creativity in youth and age. How does art make sense of our experiences? How does one forge one's career as a writer or in another creative profession? How can all of us investigate and make sense of the world, and define our own voices, through refining our reading and writing?

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Questioning the Author (QTA)

In Plato's Theaetetus, Socrates was asked to explain what it means to think. He explained that when the mind is thinking, it is asking itself questions and answering

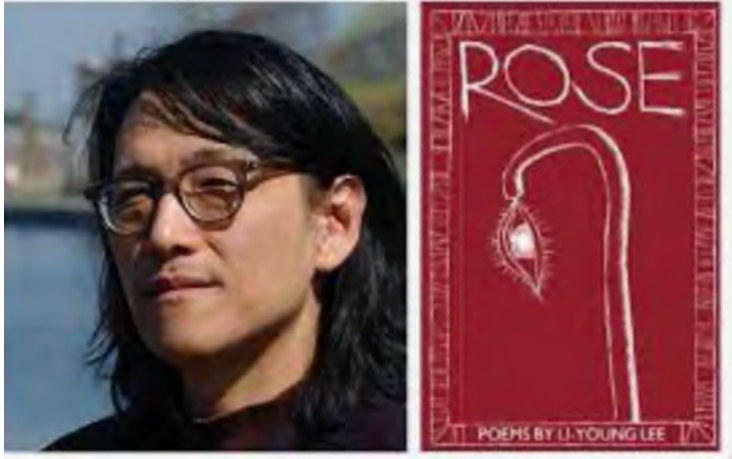
them.⁴³ When we have difficulty with a text, as may happen in particular with poetry, it helps to read carefully, reflect on what we understand, consider the author's intentions, and pose questions about the author's message. For the following passage, read once, and then reread with the QTA questions in mind, and make note of your own questions.

"Persimmons"

Li-Young Lee was born in Djakarta, Indonesia in 1957 to political exiles and prominent families from China. Lee's father was arrested and held prisoner for a year due to anti-Chinese sentiment, and after his release, the family fled through Hong Kong, Macau, and Japan before settling in the US. They moved from Seattle and settled in Pennsylvania. Lee's father had once been the personal physician to Mao Zedong, and he now became a Presbyterian minister. Lee only seriously began writing poetry after studying at the University of Pittsburgh. Lee's poetry is influenced by the classical Chinese poets Li Bo and Tu Fu.⁴⁴

⁴³ Richard T. Vacca et. al., *Content Area Reading: Literacy and Learning Across the Curriculum*, 12th edition (Pearson 2017), 172-181.

⁴⁴ Poetry Foundation editors, "Li-Young Lee," *Poetry Foundation*, <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/li-young-lee>.



[Read the complete poem here.](#)⁴⁵

For a second reading, consider the following questions before you begin:

- What is Lee trying to say?
- What is Lee's message?
- What is Lee talking about?
- What is a persimmon? Have you had one before? What are associations with persimmons?

Persimmons

BY LI-YOUNG LEE

In sixth grade Mrs. Walker
slapped the back of my head
and made me stand in the corner
for not knowing the difference
between *persimmon* and *precision*.
How to choose

⁴⁵ Ibid.

- How is Mrs. Walker as a teacher?
- Given Lee's biography, what more can we infer about this situation?
- How would you feel in this situation?
- What message is Lee trying to get across?

persimmons. This is precision.
 Ripe ones are soft and brown-spotted.
 Sniff the bottoms. The sweet one
 will be fragrant. How to eat:
 put the knife away, lay down newspaper.
 Peel the skin tenderly, not to tear the meat.
 Chew the skin, suck it,
 and swallow. Now, eat
 the meat of the fruit,
 so sweet,
 all of it, to the heart.

- Why does Lee show the precision of how to choose and eat persimmons?
- What might the persimmon represent?

Donna undresses, her stomach is white.
 In the yard, dewy and shivering
 with crickets, we lie naked,
 face-up, face-down.
 I teach her Chinese.
 Crickets: *chiu chiu*. Dew: I've forgotten.
 Naked: I've forgotten.
Ni, wo: you and me.
 I part her legs,
 remember to tell her
 she is beautiful as the moon.

- What does this stanza have to do with persimmons?
- What is the significance of the speaker teaching Chinese to Donna?

- Why does Lee differentiate between what he has forgotten and remembered?

Other words

that got me into trouble were

fight and *fright*, *wren* and *yarn*.

Fight was what I did when I was frightened,

Fright was what I felt when I was fighting.

Wrens are small, plain birds,

yarn is what one knits with.

Wrens are soft as yarn.

My mother made birds out of yarn.

I loved to watch her tie the stuff;

a bird, a rabbit, a wee man.

- Why does Lee show the connection between the words he confuses?
- What do his examples show about his immigrant and family experiences?

Mrs. Walker brought a persimmon to class

and cut it up

so everyone could taste

a *Chinese apple*. Knowing

it wasn't ripe or sweet, I didn't eat

but watched the other faces.

- What were Mrs. Walker's intentions?
- What does the speaker think about her lesson in multiculturalism?
- How do you think the students' faces were when they ate the persimmon that wasn't ripe or sweet?
- What point is the author getting across here?

My mother said every persimmon has a sun

inside, something golden, glowing,

warm as my face.

- What does the persimmon symbolize for Lee and how does this contrast with how it is presented at school?

Once, in the cellar, I found two wrapped in newspaper,
forgotten and not yet ripe.
I took them and set both on my bedroom windowsill,
where each morning a cardinal
sang, *The sun, the sun.*

Finally understanding
he was going blind,
my father sat up all one night
waiting for a song, a ghost.
I gave him the persimmons,
swelled, heavy as sadness,
and sweet as love.

- What do the persimmons represent for Lee's father?

This year, in the muddy lighting
of my parents' cellar, I rummage, looking
for something I lost.
My father sits on the tired, wooden stairs,
black cane between his knees,
hand over hand, gripping the handle.
He's so happy that I've come home.
I ask how his eyes are, a stupid question.
All gone, he answers.

Under some blankets, I find a box.
Inside the box I find three scrolls.
I sit beside him and untie
three paintings by my father:
Hibiscus leaf and a white flower.
Two cats preening.
Two persimmons, so full they want to drop from the cloth.

He raises both hands to touch the cloth,
asks, *Which is this?*

This is persimmons, Father.

- What is the significance of the things Lee finds in the cellar at two different times?
- Why might Lee describe the “muddy lighting” of the cellar?

*Oh, the feel of the wolftail on the silk,
the strength, the tense
precision in the wrist.
I painted them hundreds of times
eyes closed. These I painted blind.
Some things never leave a person:
scent of the hair of one you love,
the texture of persimmons,
in your palm, the ripe weight.*

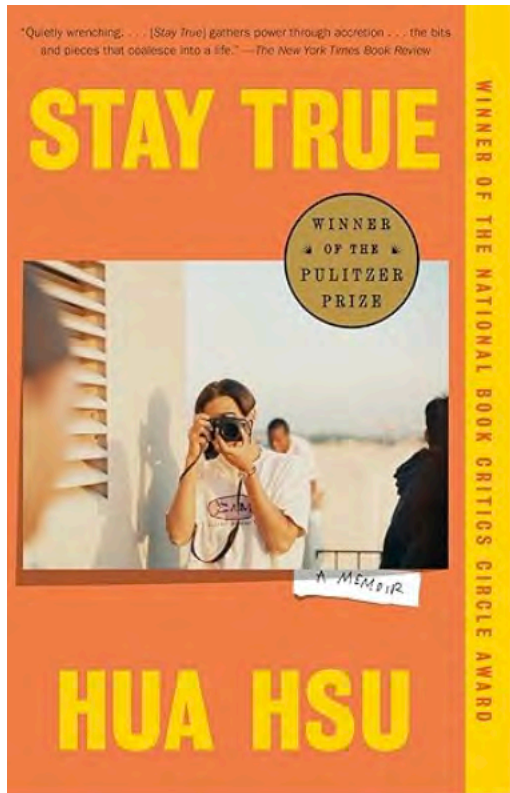
- Why does the father’s voice begin here?
- What does his art mean to him?
- What is the author telling us by ending the poem, “Some things never leave a person:/ scent of the hair of one you love,/ the texture of persimmons”?
- “Think and Search” and reflect “in your head” on the meaning of persimmons in this poem.

Li-Young Lee, “Persimmons” from *Rose*. Copyright © 1986 by Li-Young Lee. Reprinted with the permission of BOA Editions Ltd., www.boaeditions.org.

Stay True

Hua Hsu is a staff writer for *The New Yorker* and author of *A Floating Chinaman: Fantasy and Failure Across the Pacific*. He teaches at Bard College. Originally from the Bay Area,

he now lives in Brooklyn. *Stay True* received the National Book Critics Circle Award in 2022 and the Pulitzer Prize in 2023.⁴⁶



[A sample from the memoir⁴⁷](#)

Joining the Conversation

1. *Stay True* is a memoir of Hsu's college years at U.C. Berkeley and his friendship with another Asian American who differed from him in significant ways. Hsu's

⁴⁶ Wikipedia, "Hua Hsu," https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hua_Hsu.

⁴⁷ Amazon, "Stay True: A Memoir," https://www.amazon.com/Stay-True-Memoir-Vintage-Books/dp/0593315200/ref=pd_rhf_d_ee_s_pd_sbs_rvi_sccl_1_1/147-7724045-0200569?pd_rd_w=FxRYf&content-id=amzn1.sym.a089f039-4dde-401a-9041-8b534ae99e65&pf_rd_p=a089f039-4dde-401a-9041-8b534ae99e65&pf_rd_r=WFYBGRS9FAJTGAAXXQGS&pd_rd_wg=RcMIG&pd_rd_r=073b73d9-3ea2-47be-b8a3-c10c9eba0db5&pd_rd_i=0593315200&psc=1.

“coming of age” story centers around his in-depth cultural interests as well as the ideas he encountered in college. What is the significance of these cultural ideas from popular culture and academia as they are placed and recur throughout the memoir (as in the epigraph at the opening)?

2. In the second chapter (9), Hsu gives background about his immigrant parents as they shaped his childhood, and their own experiences of immigration in their college years. In what ways does Hsu differ from his parents? In what ways are their experiences similar, as he continues their journey of cultural assimilation?
3. Hsu defines himself socially as a kind of cultural connoisseur: “I began sorting my classmates according to their musical sensibilities” (39), while his friend Ken, a Japanese American whose family had been in the US several generations, was mainstream (40). When they become friends, though, they are engaged in their own search for identity: “Ken and I used to study at a particular table in the library, in the interstitial zone between where various Asian fraternities and sororities flirted with one another. They had a different pride; they claimed AZN pride, and they were aliens to us” (58). In their classes and as a response to Proposition 209’s ban on affirmative action, though, Ken and Hsu learn about the Asian American Movement and start participating in Asian American volunteer work and extracurriculars. After Ken’s murder, Hsu writes to him, “*I’m scared. . . I no longer felt linear progress. The only progress, I continued, occurs on paper*” (160). As Asian Americans of different immigrant generations, what kind of journey had Ken and Hsu been on towards understanding their identity and how to engage in the world?

Strategy: Vocabulary Triangle (Ch. 8)

Graphic organizers can help you to practice vocabulary through a variety of activities and relations to concepts. For the vocabulary triangle, write sentences connecting the vocabulary words from two corners of the triangle. Finally, write a sentence connecting all three words in the triangle.

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- interstitial (adj): of or occupying interstices, usually small spaces between things (Oxford Languages)
- AZN (adj): AZN pride is a positive stance to being Asian American and a term that arose from hip hop and internet culture within Asian American communities on the West Coast in the 1990s (wiki).
- connoisseur (n): an expert judge in matters of taste (Oxford)

⁴⁸ Richard T. Vacca et. al., *Content Area Reading: Literacy and Learning Across the Curriculum*, 12th edition (Pearson 2017), 228-229.

interstitial

Example: Many of the UC Berkeley students believed in AZN pride, which made the interstitial space between Asian and American into a visible and self-defined cultural identity.

AZN

connoisseur

Now write a sentence using all three vocab words:

4. “I’m going to write about all this one day” (193), Hsu tells his therapist in graduate school after they come to the end of their sessions. The narrative of the friendship, Ken’s senseless killing, and the aftermath triggers a mental cage one does not want to be trapped in: “This can’t have happened.” How does writing, theorizing about our place in history, and providing photos and artifacts from that time help Hsu to process and move forward from this personal tragedy that derailed his life?

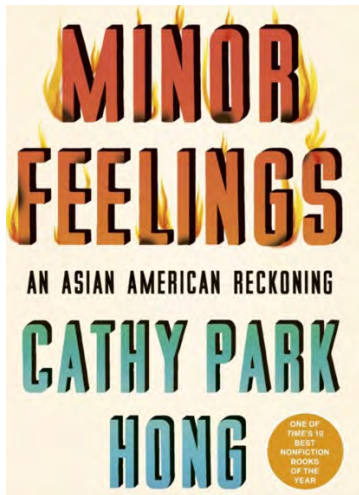
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“An Education” from *Minor Feelings*

Cathy Park Hong was born in 1976 to Korean American parents and was raised in Los Angeles. She graduated from Oberlin College and has an MFA from the Iowa Writers’ Workshop. Her books of poetry include *Translating Mo’um* (2002), *Dance Dance Revolution* (2007), and *Engine Empire* (2012). Her collection of nonfiction essays, *Minor Feelings* (2020), won the National Book Critics Circle Award.⁴⁹ After teaching at several universities, she is now a full professor of English at UC Berkeley.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Wikipedia, “Cathy Park Hong,” https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cathy_Park_Hong.

⁵⁰ “Cathy Park Hong,” <https://www.cathyparkhong.com/about>.



[Read an excerpt from the book here:](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/605371/minor-feelings-by-cathy-park-hong/) ⁵¹

Joining the discussion:

1. In “Education,” Hong recounts her high school and college experiences becoming an artist and the influence of her friends who were also Asian American women. How did they help each other establish themselves and break into art “movements [that] have been built on the bromances of bad white boys” (115) who were “above the law” (114) and could speculate “on their own legacy and critics eagerly bought their stock before they matured” (115)?
2. In a context where “as few as three” Asians could be seen as too many (121), how did Erin and Helen’s aggressive presence and unapologetic ambition (122) pave the way for their successes? How have you reacted in situations where the culture excluded or sought to suppress you?

⁵¹ Penguin Random House, “Minor Feelings,” <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/605371/minor-feelings-by-cathy-park-hong/>.

3. Hong brings up the issue of autobiography and how those portrayed in nonfiction may be offended by this. What do you think would be the balance between private life and the insights that can be gained from truthful revelation?
4. Hong reflects how she intended to only talk about Erin, but Helen also helped her to become the writer she is. How did Helen's excesses (throwing herself into subjects, languages, and people, and then abandoning them), raw anger, and plagiarism of Hong's work add to this portrait of them as emerging artists?

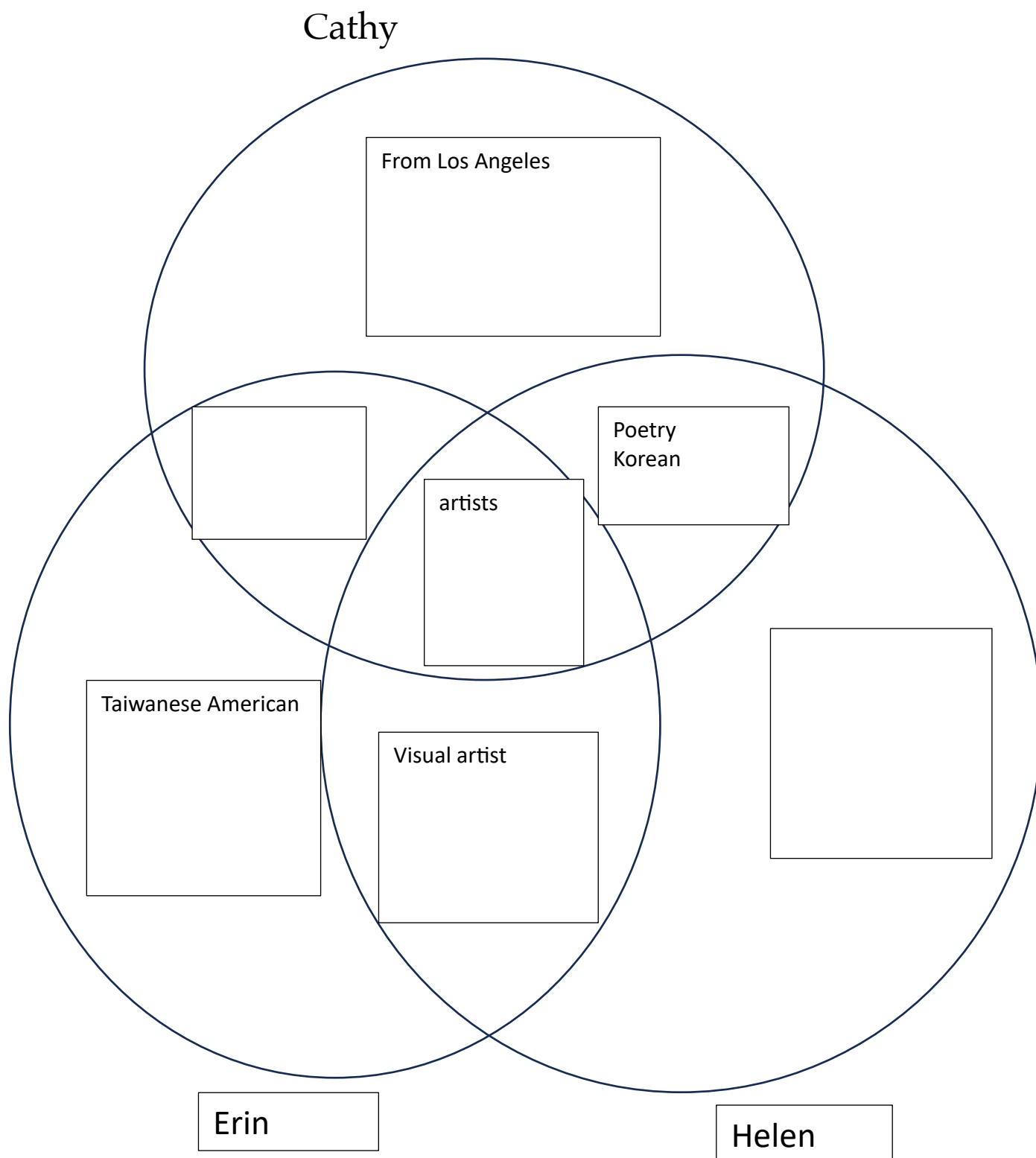
Strategy: Graphic Organizers: Venn Diagram

Graphic organizers are visual displays that can help you to investigate and review key aspects of the text.

An important aspect of this chapter is the three women artists who were friends. A Venn Diagram shows overlapping circles, with commonalities in the overlapping part, and differences in the parts of the circle that are not overlapping.

⁵² Richard T. Vacca et. al., *Content Area Reading: Literacy and Learning Across the Curriculum*, 12th edition (Pearson 2017), 280-281,

Work on filling in the characteristics that are similar and different for the three young women, Cathy, Erin, and Helen:



Considerations for Growth in Noncredit ESL Courses

Jeannie Chiu

Diablo Valley College

Department of English and ESL Program

In response to low success rates (fewer than half of all community college students earn any kind of credential, despite most of them intending to transfer (Nadworny and Schneider 2021), California legislation AB705 signed into law in 2017 seeks to maximize the possibility for students to progress to transfer level within a given time frame, given clear data that for recent high school graduates, they are more likely to succeed when given the opportunity to attempt transfer level classes (O. Rodriguez, personal communication, December 5, 2023). According to the legislation, ESL students' placement should maximize the possibility that they will enter and complete degree and transfer requirements for English within three years; native speakers are expected to enter and complete transfer-level coursework in English within one year of enrolling in community college (California Community Colleges, "Subject Specific Information"). In response to legislation, needs of the students, and trends in the field, the DVC ESL program has integrated reading and writing courses and developed in the way of new courses in listening and speaking and an array of noncredit offerings, including career and technology courses and courses mirroring credit offerings at pretransfer levels. Five levels of ESL courses are offered, including the transfer level, and this year, all transfer-level English requirement courses are being offered with sections targeted at ESL students (Diablo Valley College, "ESL Courses"). Perhaps the least understood structural change has been the creation of noncredit courses. Noncredit offerings statewide have grown in response to AB 705 and the equalization of funding rates for credit and noncredit courses, but challenges remain with meeting the needs of noncredit students and modifying systems of data collection and financial aid for this growing segment of the curriculum. Noncredit mirrored offerings promise to bring in a wider range of students into the community college system. Orientation, academic and financial support, and helping students believe they

can afford college and succeed are even more critical with students entering through noncredit offerings.

History, Definition, and Recent Funding Changes

Noncredit courses have been around for a long time. The first noncredit instruction in the state accompanied the first adult school in 1865 in San Francisco (ASCC, 2006, p. 10). At community colleges, noncredit often provides an entry point for underserved students from which they ideally can progress to credit courses or the workforce. In their 2006 report, the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges noted that noncredit generated approximately 10% of enrollment across California community colleges. Noncredit programs offer students the opportunity to enroll for free in basic skills courses, career and technical education, and lifelong learning courses. They offer students the flexibility to repeat courses, and perhaps to engage in short-term courses for specific training (ASCCC, 2006). Noncredit originated from the K-12 system of adult education, and it can only be used for certain topics:

- 1 . parenting, including parent cooperative preschools, classes in child growth and development and parent-child relationships .
- 2 . elementary and secondary basic skills and other courses and classes such as remedial academic courses or classes in reading, mathematics, and language arts .
- 3 . english [sic] as a second language .
- 4 . classes and courses for immigrants eligible for educational services in citizenship, english [sic] as a second language, and workforce preparation classes in the basic skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing, mathematics, decision-making and problem solving skills, and other classes required for preparation to participate in job-specific technical training .
- 5 . education programs for persons with substantial disabilities .
- 6 . short-term vocational programs with high employment potential .

- 7 . education programs for older adults .
- 8 . education programs for home economics .
- 9 . health and safety education .
- 10 . apprenticeship programs . (ASCCC, 2006, p. 2).

Like credit programs, noncredit instruction receives funding through state apportionment (based on the number of students and/or other factors), but until recently noncredit has been funded at a lower level than credit courses. In 2005-2006, noncredit instruction was funded at the adult education rate, which was just under half of the average rate for credit instruction. The lower rate mainly reflected the lower pay rate for noncredit instructors, based on lower education levels (since only a BA is needed to teach some noncredit courses—not the case for ESL) (Taylor, 2017, p. 8). In 2006-2007, the rate for CDCP noncredit courses (career development and college preparation, including ESL) was raised to 71% of the credit rate, whereas regular noncredit was funded at 60% of the credit rate. In 2015-2016, Chapter 34 increased the funding for CDCP courses to around 100% of the credit rate (Taylor, 2017, p. 9). Under the current California state Student Centered Funding Formula, noncredit students are still funded less than credit students, and underrepresented students are funded at a higher rate than credit students. According to Sara Parker, Vice President of Business and Administrative Services at DVC, in 2024, the base allocation per full time equivalent student is \$5300 for credit students, \$4451 for noncredit students, and \$7400 for dual enrolled high school students and formerly incarcerated students (Parker, 2024).

In 2015-2016, noncredit accounted for only 6% of instruction at California Community Colleges, ranging widely from 32% of FTE at the San Francisco Community

College District to less than 1% in 20 other districts (Taylor, 2017, p. 6). Since the changes in the funding formula, more noncredit certificates have been created. In 2015-2016, the number of CDCP course sections increased, and the enhanced funding brought in additional revenue for districts offering CDCP. For example, in 2015-2016, San Diego Community College District brought in 9 million dollars more than it would have under the previous enhanced noncredit rate (Taylor, 2017, p. 12). In 2021-2022, noncredit courses accounted for a larger share of precollegiate courses than did credit courses (Legislative Analyst's Office, 2022).

Also in 2015-2016, the state created a new funding stream for adult education, called the Adult Education Block Grant (AEBG), later renamed the California Adult Education Program (CAEP). The Legislative Analyst's Office notes that the current funding model is insufficient and outdated to meet ESL demands. While it is projected that more than 6 million adults in California lack English proficiency, fewer than 140,000 adults enrolled in ESL classes in 2021-22 (Legislative Analyst's Office, 2022).

Noncredit Programs and City College of San Francisco

As we see in the above data, San Francisco Community College District offers the largest percentage of noncredit courses of any district in the state. A 2008 report notes that nearly half of the enrollment in City College was in noncredit courses (Moser, 2008), and at its peak in 2008, CCSF enrolled more than 100,000 students, making it the largest community college in California, with a diversity of offerings in "transfer and career preparation, English as a Second Language (ESL) to serve San

Francisco's large immigrant population, courses for older adults, and a range of labor, women's, queer, and ethnic studies classes" (Rein et. al., 2020). As a response to the "show cause" accreditation warning given to City College in 2012, major changes were made in narrowing the college's mission and cutting campuses, staff, and classes. AFT Local 2121, students, faculty, and community members protested and passed a parcel tax to support City College, and successfully opposed campus closures. Rein et. al. argue that statewide policy prioritizing first time, full-time students and streamlined transfer detracts from the open access mission of community colleges (Rein et. al., 2020).

While City College put to rest the "show cause" warning in 2017, budget issues continued, resulting in the layoff of 38 faculty in 2022. The college continues to struggle with a vicious cycle of cutting faculty and classes and subsequent decreased enrollments, on top of an across the board decrease in community college enrollments since the pandemic (Rodriguez, 2022). City College's financial issues may stem from a variety of management problems, but suggest the challenges of funding large noncredit programs. The situation should have improved due to the equalization of funding for credit and CDCP noncredit courses since 2015-2016.

Lack of Inclusion: Federal Data and Financial Aid Gaps for Noncredit

Though noncredit plays an increasingly important role in California and in higher education in general, it has been understudied. As of 2019, IPEDS (the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System) carried out by the U.S. Department of Education (IPEDS) excluded noncredit students who were nondegree seeking. Noncredit activities

were excluded from reports on Admissions, Completions, Outcomes, and Graduation Rates (Erwin, 2019, pp. ii-iii). The fact that noncredit may be missing in enrollment data but present in Human Resources accounting leads to inaccuracies in reporting of student-faculty ratios and FTE student revenue and expense ratios (Erwin, 2019, p. iii). Community Colleges need to become more aware of noncredit data on IPEDS. Staff should be trained on reporting data on instructors who teach noncredit, noncredit enrollments, and clear definitions of different kinds of noncredit classes, such as vocational, pre-collegiate, and avocational (Erwin, 2019, pp. 27-30). As of a 2021 report, IPEDS statistics continue to exclude noncredit courses that are not tied to a certificate, which makes community colleges appear to be getting more funding per student than they really are (Romano and D’Amico, 2021).

Another problem for noncredit courses is student ineligibility for financial aid. In a 2013 article, *The New York Times* reveals that a majority of Federal financial aid goes to students in traditional degree programs, while only a little goes to students in noncredit programs, even though these students are likely to have more financial need. Noncredit students may be eligible for state financial aid, and there has been talk about restructuring Federal Pell grants to assist more noncredit students in training for the workforce (Greenhouse, 2013). Students taking both credit and noncredit classes can be eligible for financial aid, but the noncredit courses do not count towards their credit load requirement. Recent changes in the FAFSA allow students to go to school part-time and still receive financial aid (“Financial Aid,” 2023). Financial Aid considerations could be made clearer on our ESL website in explaining credit and noncredit mirrored options, as for example in the explanation on the [Laney College ESOL website](#) (Laney College, 2023, “ESOL Courses”).

Enrollment Trends

It is difficult to gauge the effects of AB 705, an increase in ESL offerings in listening, speaking, and career and technology skills, and mirrored noncredit courses due to the pandemic, economic downturn, and shift to online learning post-pandemic. Enrollment declines were even greater for ESL than for DVC overall and overall community colleges.

Figure 1

CC Enrollment Declines: National vs. CA vs. DVC

All students who had an enrollment as a non-special admit student in at least one term of the selected year (change YOY)			
Year	Nat'l	CA Statewide	DVC
2018-2019		2,097,878 (-01.9%)	27,314 (-0.5%)
2019-2020		2,021,331 (-03.6%)	26,760 (-2.0%)
2020-2121	(15% total)	1,749,062 (-13.5%)	25,883 (-3.3%)
2021-2022		1,648,323 (-05.8%)	23,322 (-9.9%)

Sources: The National Student Clearinghouse Research Center's *Stay Informed* series
 California Community Colleges, Chancellor's Office Management Information System

(Garcia and Eidhin, 2023)

Figure 2

ESL Overall Enrollment Trends

Fall ESL Enrollment		
Year	Enrolled	Change (YOY)
2019	793	
2020	563	-29.0%
2021	512	-9.1%
2022	506	-1.2%
2023	546	+7.9%

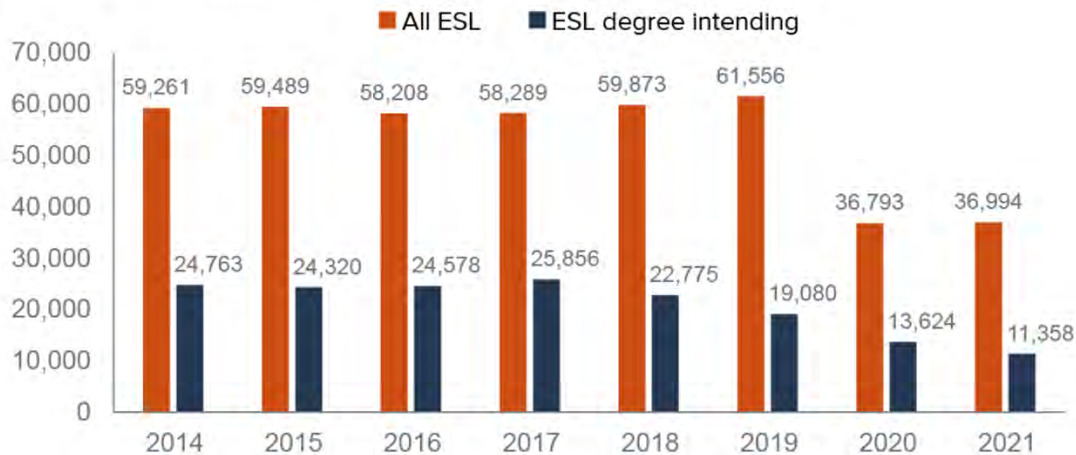
Spring ESL Enrollment		
Year	Enrolled	Change (YOY)
2020	692	
2021	475	-31.4%
2022	464	-2.3%
2023	472	+1.7%

(Garcia and Eidhin, 2023)

It was unsurprising that California ESL enrollments declined sharply in 2020.

Figure 3

The number of ESL students declined steeply during the pandemic



SOURCE: Author calculations from Chancellor's Office MIS data.

NOTES: Fall of each year. Degree-intending ESL students are identified using ESL students' self-reported goals.

(Rodriguez et. al., 2022)

The pandemic and economic downturn likely hit ESL students particularly hard, and travel restrictions also resulted in a sharp decrease in international students. AB 705 and changes in placement policy direct more students to transfer level courses and reduce the number of ESL students at the pretransfer level (Rodriguez et. al., 2022). Many of the ESL offerings shifted to online, which seemed popular with students, but also may have lowered success rates. Despite the expected declines, this year ESL enrollments have seen an upward trend at DVC.

Adult Schools and Community College ESL

The expansion of noncredit ESL offerings at community colleges raises the question of where adult ESL should be taught, particularly at the lower levels. There has been a lack of clarity on this issue since the purview of community colleges and adult education were defined. The first adult school opened in San Francisco in 1856. The first community college opened in Fresno in 1920. Both were governed by K-12 districts. In 1921, adult residents of California were granted the right to receive ESL and citizenship classes from school districts. In 1968, community colleges were separated from K-12 systems and placed under a separate Board of Governors of California Junior Colleges. In the 1960s, 1970s, and 1990s, school districts and community colleges struggled legally over who had responsibility for adult education. In 1991, the legislature officially added adult education to the mission of community colleges (Legislative Analyst's Office, 2012).

As of a 2012 LAO report, the responsibility for adult ESL instruction remained split between adult schools, which receive funding through K-12 education, and community colleges, and coordination between the two systems has been unclear. In both institutional settings, adult ESL education is not the primary focus—neither in the

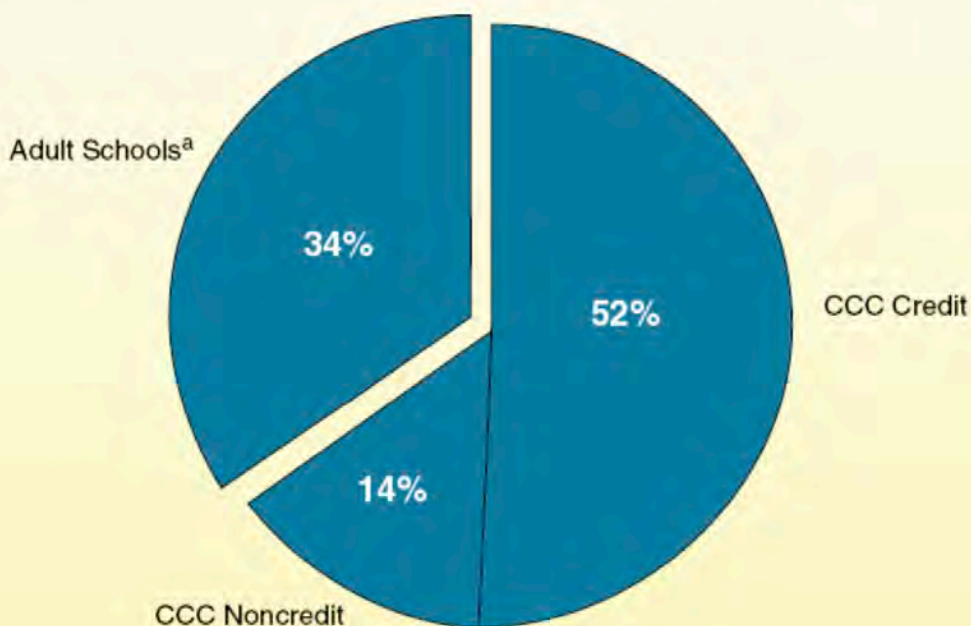
K-12 context focused on educating children, nor in community colleges, where the primary focus is on degree completion and transfer. Funding has been an issue when K-12 districts have been given the latitude to use adult school funding for whatever they need. The 2012 LAO report (notably, before AB 705 and equalization of credit and noncredit funding) suggests that community colleges were incentivized to offer pre-transfer level courses for credit rather than noncredit because of higher funding rates for credit courses, “regardless of . . . whether it is the best fit for students.” The implication here is that pretransfer level courses at community colleges should be offered on a noncredit basis without fees.

As of 2012, community colleges offered more adult education courses than did adult schools, and the majority of the community college classes were for credit.

Figure 4

Community Colleges Provide More Adult Education Than Adult Schools

Full-Time Equivalent Students in Adult Education Courses (2009-10)

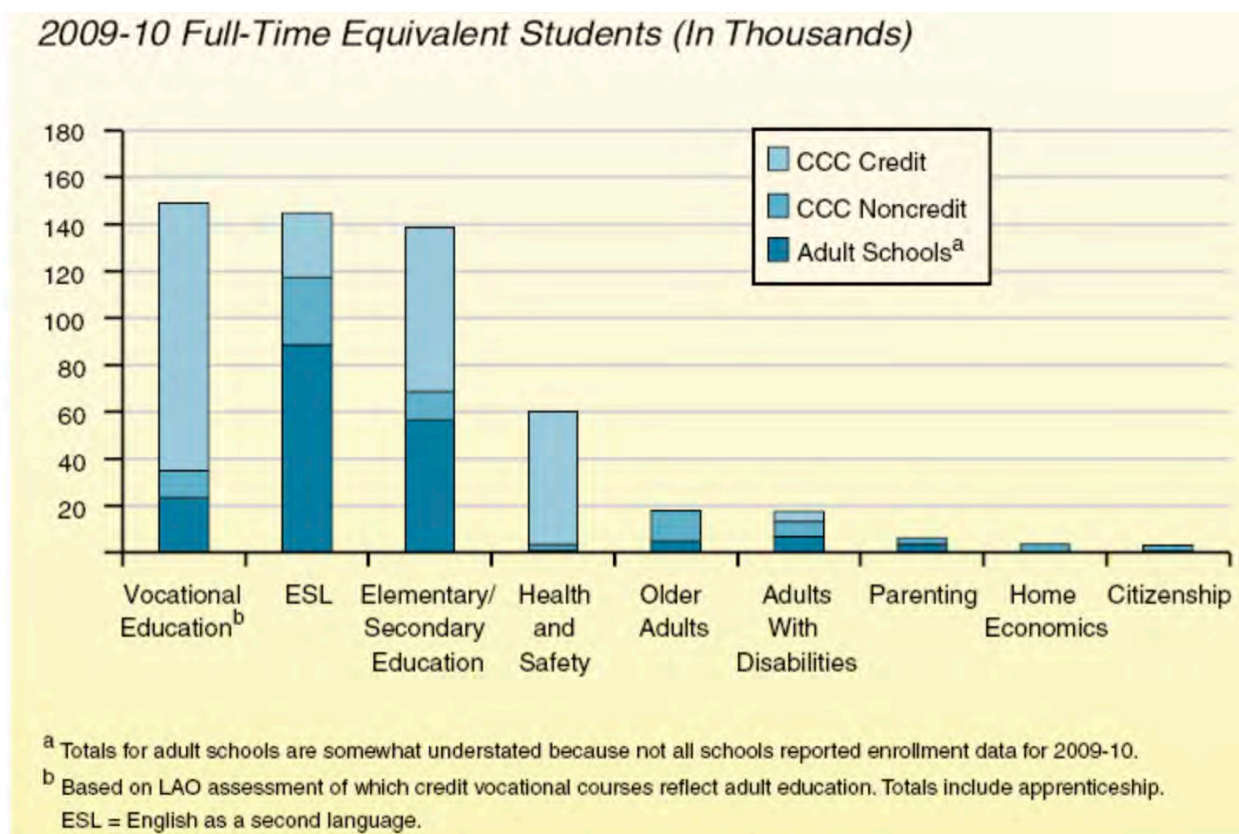


^a Total is somewhat understated because not all adult schools reported enrollment data for 2009-10.

(Legislative Analyst's Office, 2012)

However, more ESL instruction was occurring at adult schools than at community colleges:

Figure 5



(Legislative Analyst's Office, 2012)

Some coordination has occurred between adult schools and community college districts, but has been inconsistent. Among other suggestions, the LAO report recommends establishing a clearer line between pre-college and college-level work, and restricting credit to college-level work. It also suggests raising per-student adult school funding to the level of community college funding, and separating out adult schools from K-12 districts. While California Community Colleges are united in one system, there is no such centralized oversight of all adult schools (LAO, 2012).

A 2017 LAO report, "California Community Colleges: Effects of Increases in Noncredit Course Funding Rates," notes an example of one of the community colleges

they interviewed that partnered with area adult schools. They agreed to have the adult schools offer the beginning level courses so that the community college could develop a streamlined advanced ESL certificate (1 year as opposed to the previous 2.5 years), which led to improved completion rates (Taylor, 2017, p. 13). However, completion rates may have improved in part because lower-level students with higher attrition rates were moved out of the community college system to adult school. The report also mentions sources of community college funding that can supplement CDCP programs, such as the Strong Workforce Program, Student Success and Support Program, Adult Education Block Grant, and Basic Skills Initiative (Taylor, 2017, p. 13). This suggests ways that community colleges can coordinate with adult schools, and also make use of a variety of funding streams, in planning their ESL and noncredit offerings.

Coordination at DVC with Adult Schools is in the process of being restarted after the pandemic with a new ESL Liaison.

Laney College ESOL Program

We can see the impact on community colleges of changes in the local adult school in Oakland, CA. According to Steve Zetlan, the chair of the ESOL program at Laney College, their program consists of a noncredit Basic English program with four levels, and four levels of Academic English with mirrored credit and noncredit courses. The Basic English program began to grow a few years before the pandemic when the local adult school temporarily disappeared, and Laney was getting more and more ESOL students who were not prepared for Academic English (Laney College is located near Oakland Chinatown). The mirrored Academic courses arose as a response to AB 705. The Basic English classes are 8 weeks long, and students have a habit of showing up or not as in Adult School. The main challenge for students is transitioning from Basic

English to Academic English, since students often do not understand the rigors of the sixteen-week semester where they are required to participate and complete the work. Laney's ESOL program is working on presenting the orientation information for Academic English to students in a variety of ways, such as in a video recording, by each instructor, or as part of the application or enrollment process. A major challenge for their mirrored classes has been the high rate of attrition among noncredit students (perhaps coming from the Basic English program), so to raise completion rates, they have capped the noncredit portion of the mirrored courses at 5 out of 30 for reading and writing courses, and 10 out of 35 for grammar courses. The noncredit program has been booming and Laney has been unable to offer enough sections to meet the demand for ESOL courses. Other programs have supported the expansion of ESOL, since the ESOL students are filling the classes of other departments, particularly Career and Technical Education courses such as Culinary Arts and Cosmetology. At Laney College, Guided Self-placement is specifically for ESOL students, and it is part of the online application process which brings students directly to classes they can enroll in (S. Zetlan, personal communication, November 20, 2023).

Program Growth at DVC

At DVC, we began offering noncredit at the low-intermediate 67 level in Fall 2020, and noncredit was offered as Pass/No Pass. 67 was initially a catch-all two-credit course but we began to see more need for instruction at the lower levels and developed a range of courses. While the 60s level focuses more on syntax, sentences, and paragraphs, the 70s level is more rigorous. Enrollment has begun to grow, perhaps largely by word of mouth, and differs from adult schools in our academic focus, whereas adult school tends to be more oriented towards life skills. Anecdotally, credit

and noncredit students seem to have similar levels of motivation. Students may take noncredit courses to avoid the fee, especially if they have not yet met their residency requirement (K. Moran, personal communication, October 10, 2023). However, students need be taking credit courses to be eligible for Federal financial aid (Diablo Valley College, “Frequently Asked Questions”).

As of Fall 2023, the ESL program has extended its mirrored course offerings from the first two levels, 60s and 70s, up to the 80s and 90s. Mirrored offerings are currently being proposed for the 100 level as well, so that students have noncredit options all the way up to the transfer level (L. Sample, personal communication, October 19, 2023). Slots in the mirrored classes for credit and noncredit can go to either type of student, depending on who enrolls first (K. Moran, personal communication, October 23, 2023). Students may choose noncredit options for a variety of reasons, including that they are free, repeatable, and low stakes, students’ residency status, part-time status, outside commitments, etc.

Noncredit students likely need even more guidance, support, and encouragement in deciding upon their pathway through college and negotiating such issues as childcare, work responsibilities, and financial aid. For example, in a 2019 report by the Public Policy Institute of California, the authors note “the high number of Latinos taking nonsequence courses” and suggest “it is also possible that a growth in noncredit offerings could pull these students further off the degree-seeking ESL sequence track.” Mirrored course offerings that are part of a sequence towards transfer-level, targeted advising, strategic placement in courses, and information about available certificates and degrees can help “raise aspirations and lead to college degrees” (Rodriguez et. al., 2019). Students enrolled in noncredit courses often face more barriers

to enrolling in college, but proper counseling can inform them of ways that college can be affordable, attainable, and appropriate for them.

Mirrored Courses

According to a powerpoint from ASCCC, for students who take only noncredit courses, the courses are free, they can delay the start of the AB705 ENGL/ESL clock, and they can try out academic work in a lower pressure situation while being on a sequence towards transfer. For students who take both credit and noncredit classes, they can still be eligible for financial aid (Saperston and Oates). However, students should be aware that they may be eligible for financial aid (such as the Cal Grant) for a limited number of years or credits (The California State University). Noncredit classes enable students to defer starting their financial aid clock. With noncredit, they can try out a course before taking it for credit, repeat a class or co-requisite if they need more help to pass a transfer-level class, explore new subject areas, and earn a non-credit certificate. However, difficulties with mirrored courses are limited support services and follow up, possibly lower student success rates, differing attendance and grading policies (though policies are similar for credit and noncredit at DVC and Laney College), general confusion on the logistical details, and possible union issues. Saperston and Oates suggest numerical caps for the credit and noncredit mirrored courses. Since credit students tend to be more successful, policies may favor credit students. Credit students can receive priority registration, while noncredit seats could be limited (Saperston and Oates). This is assuming that credit is better than noncredit, which is arguable since some studies take for granted that pre-transfer course work should be noncredit.

Data on Noncredit Classes at DVC

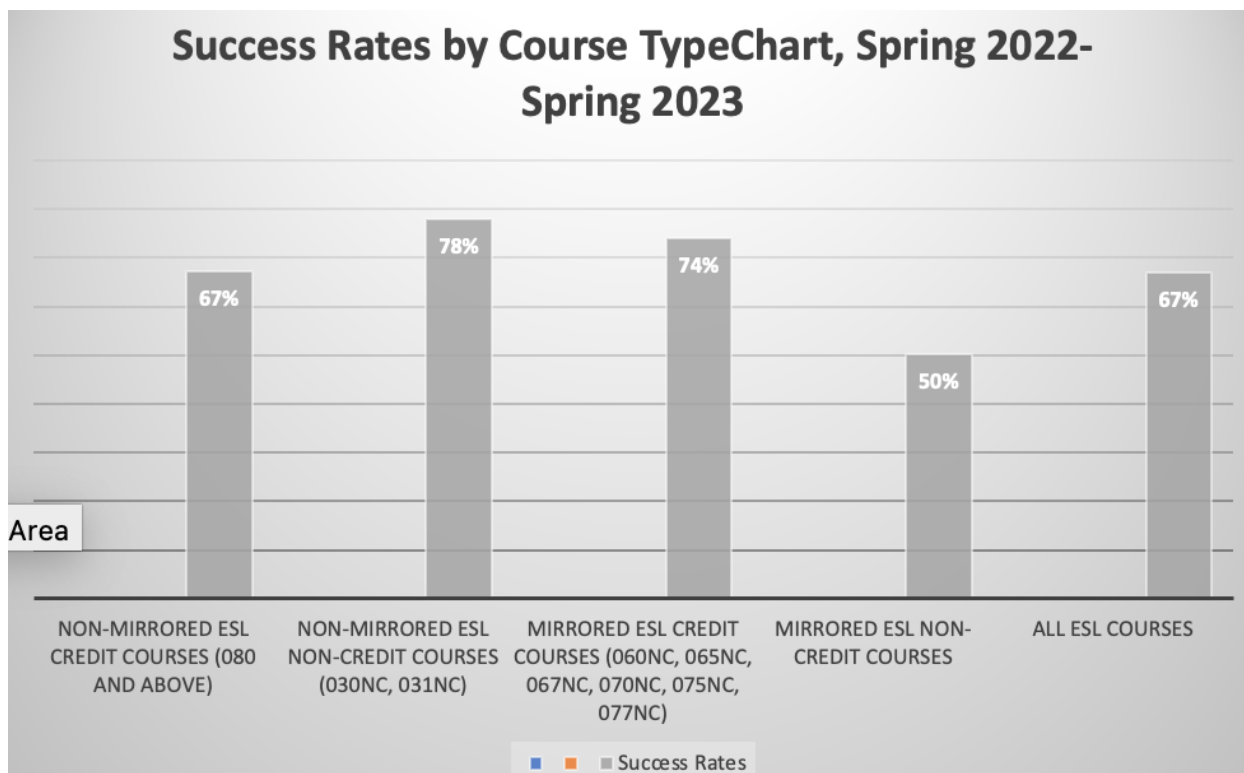
Method

I met with Lindsay Kong, Dean of Institutional Effectiveness and Accreditation at DVC, with my research questions about noncredit classes. She compiled data on all ESL classes for the semesters that mirrored credit and noncredit courses have been offered, Spring 2022, Fall 2022, and Spring 2023. She also requested data from the district on these ESL students, including characteristics such as name, ethnicity, gender, age, academic program, residency status, programs completed, numbers of credit and noncredit courses taken, percentage of credit or noncredit courses taken, and specific courses taken with the grade earned.

It recently came to our attention that noncredit students are tracked by positive attendance hours rather than the census roster (K. Novak, personal communication, November 2, 2023). It's unclear how the different tracking system may affect data on course completion and success rates for noncredit students. At Laney College, for asynchronous online classes, they moved from a positive attendance system to one that asks instructors to document hours for a course on a ROSC form, which takes into account faculty substantive contact hours and activity hours, while positive attendance only includes student actual attendance hours in the FTES calculation (A. Elmasry, personal communication, November 27, 2023). Face to face and synchronous online classes are still required to report positive attendance hours. Given a caveat about noncredit success rates possibly being skewed lower than credit success rates because nonattending students may not be dropped at the census date as they are for credit classes, preliminary results from Spring 2022 to Spring 2023 show the success rates for non-mirrored ESL credit courses (080 and above) to be at the average of all ESL courses,

67%. Success rates for the non-mirrored ESL noncredit courses (technology and English for Employment courses) were higher at 78%. For mirrored ESL classes, success rates were higher for the credit sections (74%) and lower for noncredit sections (50%).

Figure 6



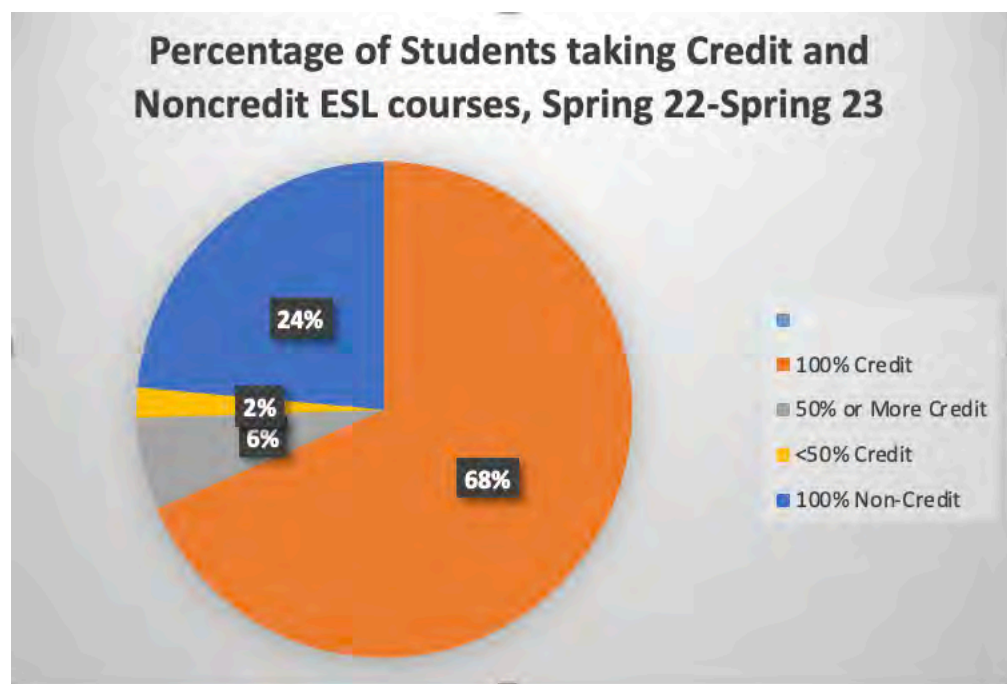
Data during this time period is influenced by a number of additional factors, including newness of the noncredit program, the small number of non-mirrored non-credit courses (two sections), and the prevalence of online course offerings post-pandemic. For example, students may have enrolled at the intermediate 70s level because noncredit courses were not yet available at higher levels, and then dropped out of the course when they found it to be too easy. For online sections, students sometimes enroll not knowing it is an asynchronous course, and therefore stop participating in the course (L. Sample, personal communication, October 19, 2023). As of Fall 2023, mirrored ESL

courses are being offered up to the 90s High-Advanced Level, so it will be interesting to see future data, possibly correcting for noncredit students who stopped attending before census date, and encompassing these higher levels.

Student Characteristics

How do students differ based on whether they take credit or noncredit courses? In many ways, they are similar. We compared students who took 100% credit ESL courses, more than 50% credit courses, less than 50% credit courses, and 100% noncredit courses from Spring 2022 to Spring 2023, during a time period when noncredit offerings were starting to be implemented and mirrored courses were only offered up to the intermediate level (70s). At this point the majority of courses taken were still credit courses.

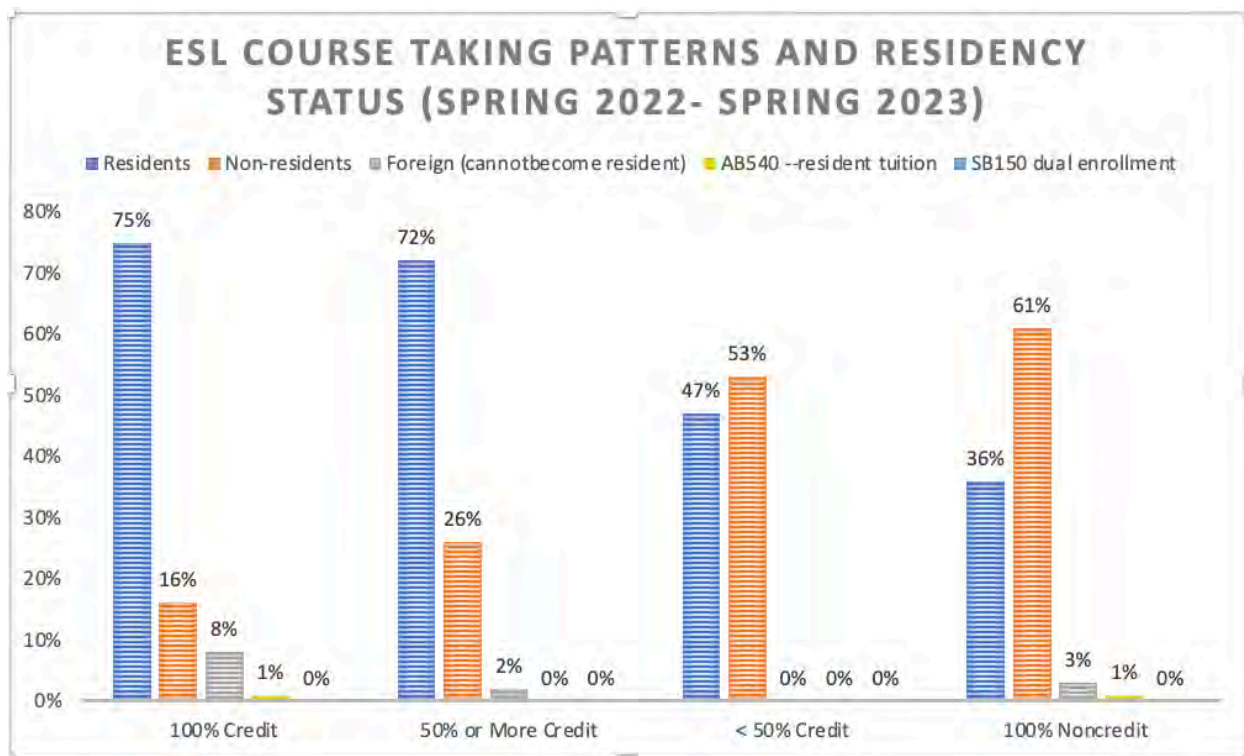
Figure 7



From this sample of 764 students, the percentage of women in each category varies from 69% for 100% noncredit up to 80% for students taking less than 50% credit courses. Students taking fewer credit courses (less than 50% credit or all noncredit) included more students who were forty or over (40% and 39%), while those taking more credit courses (100% or more than 50% credit) had fewer students who were forty and over (31% and 30%). There was some variation in ethnicity among the major ethnic groups, with those taking 100% credit courses being 19% Hispanic and 20% White, while those taking 100% noncredit courses were 31% Hispanic and 14% White. I will note that from a quick survey of individual student data, students from the Middle East or Central Asia might mark off a variety of ethnicities, including Asian, Middle Eastern, Other / Undeclared, Multi-Race, or White, adding a significant degree of uncertainty into this data on ethnicity. Student terminology and perception of their ethnicity also likely changes over time (O. Rodriguez, personal communication, December 5, 2023).

Students did differ markedly on the basis of residency. For those taking 100% credit courses, 75% were California residents, 16% were nonresidents (including students with visas that are not F-1 who are not eligible for residency, students who do not yet qualify for residency because they have not been residents for one year and one day before the start of the term, and students who are residents who were initially misclassified, perhaps because they took an online summer class in another state, for example (A. Gonzales, personal communication, November 28, 2023)), and 8% were F-1 international students (unable to become residents). For those taking 100% noncredit courses, 36% were residents, 61% were nonresidents, and 3% were foreign.

Figure 8



With regards to foreign student visa holders, many international students at DVC choose not to take ESL classes because they already have to pass a minimum English proficiency requirement to study here (D. Gephart, personal communication, October 10, 2023). This comparison highlights the significance of not only cost, but residency status for noncredit students. We can also note the extremely small numbers of AB 540 students (nonresidents who qualify for resident tuition through US high school attendance, graduation, and applying to legalize their status) and SB150 students (dual enrolled nonresident high school students who qualify for resident tuition), which indicates possible areas of outreach and growth for students to be able to benefit from resident tuition status (Diablo Valley College, “Residency”), especially given that AB 540 students factor into the Student Centered Funding Formula (California Community Colleges, “Student Centered Funding Formula”). Laney College has an [Undocumented](#)

[Community Resource Center and web page](#) to help students with questions about enrolling, records, tuition, and financial aid given their residency status (Laney College, 2023, “Undocumented Community Resource Center”).

Helping Noncredit Students Succeed

In 2023-2024, the DVC ESL program is conducting research into the noncredit program, among other things, so more qualitative research, such as interviews, will be conducted by the ESL team (K. Moran-Gillis, personal communication, October 10, 2023). Prior research on noncredit ESL students sheds light on the kind of issues students may face. It does seem like many institutions take for granted that pre-transfer-level classes would be noncredit, so the transition to credit bearing courses is in effect advancing to a TLE course (transfer-level English). In “Noncredit to Credit Transitioning Matters for Adult ESL Learners in a California Community College” (2011), Liza Becker used Bourdieu’s (1972/1977) concept of cultural capital in interviews with 17 advanced ESL students who were completing the ESL Bridge Program at an anonymous California community college, and who either went onto the transfer level or postponed (Becker, 2011, p. 20). The study found that the students who successfully transferred from noncredit to the TLE level showed high cultural capital, that is privileged backgrounds where they came to the US with higher degrees, financial stability, and a strong social network, from such countries as China, Colombia, El Salvador, Korea, Kuwait, Mexico, Peru, and Vietnam. They had a strong sense of identity, knowledge of how to access resources, and a motivation to regain the position of centrality that they had had in their home countries.

In contrast, the majority of students with low cultural capital had to postpone their plans to move onto the for credit transfer level class due to life circumstances. The

students were from low socioeconomic backgrounds and had struggled with economic hardship and poor working conditions. Most were from Mexico, and most had education levels ranging from second grade through high school. Their marginalized economic positions in both Mexico and the US were reflected in feelings that students from other countries were “smarter” than them and a sense that they themselves were “wasting time in class” (Becker, 2011, p. 21) because maintaining earnings was a priority. Many of these students said their intention in taking noncredit classes was to learn better English for the workplace. These students did feel that they had made great gains over their previous situation in Mexico, and were now considering more academic and career options as a result of the ESL Bridge program (Becker, 2011, p. 22).

Students from low cultural capital backgrounds faced a variety of financial and educational barriers to continuing to the credit and transfer levels. Nevertheless, several students in the study were able to continue to transfer level from low cultural capital backgrounds by being proactive in meeting with counselors and the financial aid office. Other such students were able to show resilience even when they felt marginalized in class by higher performing or exclusionary classmates. Becker concludes that “knowledge acquisition and reflective strategies” ((2011, p. 23) help students to persist in their coursework despite obstacles in order to achieve long term socioeconomic benefits.

Becker suggests that lessons that have to do with issues of identity, marginality, and mattering can foster student reflection and new ways for understanding their situation. Career and educational resources can be presented to students through a variety of venues, such as orientation, classroom presentations, newsletters, conferences, and courses on career and educational planning. Students can even register while in class and have an opportunity to interact with guest speakers from the credit

program. The ESL program can also educate the college as a whole about tolerance of minor language errors. Effective practices that we already use at DVC include having tutoring embedded in the classroom (supplemental instructors) and offering learning communities, such as Puente, that build community and integrate student services, link subject areas, or provide additional support (Becker, 2011, p. 24), though it would be wonderful to scale such programs to serve more students (O. Rodriguez, personal communication, December 5, 2023).

A 2022 report of the Public Policy Institute of California reflects on changes implemented as a response to AB 705, and how it is difficult to evaluate the impacts given the challenges faced by ESL programs and students during the pandemic. Colleges have successfully shortened their ESL sequences and are required to place students who attended US high schools into transfer level English, so English language learners in TLEs will need more support. Students in TLE for multilingual students had higher success rates than students in general TLE courses. Better tracking could be done of English language learners (ELs) in general TLE courses, perhaps through K-12 data, and it may also be interesting to track the numbers of international students who enroll in TLE for multilingual students, though overall data indicated 50% of these students had come through California high schools (O. Rodriguez, personal communication, December 5, 2023).

One area DVC's ESL program could expand in is suggested by the growing number of transferable advanced ESL classes at California community colleges, with the understanding that ESL can be considered as learning another language rather than as remedial English. For example, Cypress College has made its ESL reading and writing courses transferable from the intermediate level upwards (CSU Baccalaureate Level Course List, 2023). Such transferable ESL courses could be connected to the general

curriculum as part of Guided Pathways or College and Career Access Pathways, improving the pathways for EL students and ensuring that as many courses as possible count towards graduation requirements (Rodriguez et. al., 2022). Noncredit programs may seem to be moving away from this emphasis on streamlining and raising the level of ESL courses to the transfer level, but provide a much needed expansion of the entryway to access for diverse EL learners. The PPIC report notes that students who took ESL courses succeeded at higher rates in TLE courses. Does this mean that they could have succeeded at the transfer level earlier, as Rodriguez et. al. suggest, or that the ESL program prepared them better to succeed? The report concludes that the advantages of taking the ESL sequence do not outweigh the gains in success that can be made by EL students entering more quickly into TLE courses. Rodriguez notes that students who did not succeed in transfer level math or English also did not succeed in their other courses, suggesting that those specific skills may not be the issue, but rather other factors such as childcare, housing, time, and difficulty accessing tutoring and other supports. However, this assertion could be questionable given the special significance of time and practice for language acquisition, though it is true that language acquisition can continue over one's lifetime. Generally speaking, creating noncredit offerings, such as in Math, to get around the acceleration intended by AB 705 could be problematic. On the other hand, adding mirrored noncredit courses in an existing ESL sequence does not change the amount of remediation, but instead extends access to more students (O. Rodriguez, personal communication, December 5, 2023).

It may be interesting to explore further options, such as Solano Community College's integration of ESL into the ENGL program, the compression of the sequence at Cuyamaca College, AB 288 and the expansion of access to dual enrollment (including for ESL), where high school students can get credit for both high school work and

college requirements, and research carried out by CATESOL and CCRC (Community College Research Center at Teacher's College, Columbia University). Placement has been a major issue with regards to AB 705, and Rodriguez notes a problem with providing samples of work at different levels to students as part of their self-placement. A confidence gap may result in some groups of students placing themselves at a level lower than their actual skill level. For approaches to noncredit ESL, the CUNY CLIP program is a successful approach to providing ESL students with an intensive, 25 hour a week, 16-week noncredit ESL immersion program before they begin their studies at City University of New York (O. Rodriguez, personal communication, December 5, 2023).

Rodriguez emphasizes the benefit of providing information for students who have already shown an interest in college by showing up on campus, and the importance of informing low-income students that financial aid, such as Cal Grant, and basic needs programs, such as SNAP, CalFresh, and Medicare, can cover as much as a minimum wage job would. Despite the national student debt crisis, student debt in California is well below the national average. Students and their parents can regard going to college as their job, which will be an investment that pays off in long-term earnings and quality of life (O. Rodriguez, personal communication, December 5, 2023).

With the advent of AB 705, noncredit courses have received greater support through equalization of funding, as it has often been regarded as appropriate to offer pre-transfer level courses as noncredit, and these support courses are more needed since developmental courses have been cut. We might also consider further bolstering the upper levels of ESL as well, as we have done by offering ESL versions of ENGL 122, 126, and 123. We might work on making intermediate and advanced levels of ESL transferable as well, as was done at Cypress College, and possibly even consider an

intensive ESL pre-college program, such as CUNY CLIP, perhaps similar to the International Student Academic Bridge Program (Diablo Valley College, “International Student Academic Bridge Program”). For mirrored courses, we may want to keep an eye on attrition rates, and cap noncredit enrollment if attrition is high in that area, as was done at Laney College. Success rates appear to be lower for noncredit students than credit students in mirrored courses, though the fact that noncredit is tracked through positive attendance hours rather than the census roster may skew success rates lower. It is likely that noncredit opens access to more students, especially those with nonresident status and financial challenges. That being said, strong efforts should be made to inform students of course expectations and the array of financial aid and government resources that can make college completion affordable for them. Also, we need to be aware of possible issues with differing policies for noncredit with respect to attendance, grading, and instructor substantive contact hours (S. Oates, personal communication, December 5, 2023). More qualitative research on credit and noncredit students in mirrored classes can shed light on their goals and needs, including possible divides between groups of students with high and low cultural capital, and we should also keep in mind the confidence gap between different groups of students when it comes to placement through counseling and guided self-placement.

The changing demographic in the nation, and especially in California, means an increase in English Language Learners. While credit and noncredit programs have historically been siloed off from each other, several interventions can help students into the college system and from noncredit to credit pathways. Students appreciate the low stakes, free noncredit offerings. Further counseling and academic planning can help them to make decisions about financial aid and their future goals. Moreover, addressing issues of cultural capital can help more students from disadvantaged backgrounds feel

that they belong in college, that they can afford college by making use of available resources, and that they can continue onto the transfer track. Mirrored credit and noncredit offerings have the potential to boost college enrollment and, paired with student services presented in a variety of settings, to help more students to succeed through completion of their college goals.

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