

ASSESSMENT

My Part of the Story Assessment Ideas

Overview

About This Assessment

Consider the following ideas for a final assessment or project for this unit before launching the next part of your course on United States history, literature, or civics.

Procedure

Assessment Ideas

1. Interviews about American Identity

One way to continue students' inquiry into the connections between individual identity and the identity of the United States is to have them interview others in the school or community to find additional perspectives in response to the question, "What does it mean to 'be American'?" As a minimum, they should interview three other students and three adults. Students could record others' responses to this question and create a short video (with their phones), or they might transcribe the answers. Either way, they should accompany their findings with a paragraph discussing the common themes that they heard, as well as the ways their own research either connects to or differs from the ideas they encountered in this lesson.

2. Inquiry Question

Another way to assess students' thinking about the identity of the United States and to help pivot toward the country's history or literature is to enlist the class in creating a list of inquiry questions for the year. In this lesson, students' thinking has been made visible in a variety of ways, including the identity chart the class created for the United States. They might now pause and ask, for example: Why do some people think being American is about arrogance, while others think it is about generosity? Or: What is it about the history of the United States that leads to different ideas about what American identity really is? At the end of class or for homework, ask each student to survey all of the ideas that they and their classmates have written down and write two questions that they would like to find answers to over the course of their study of the United States. As you read and evaluate students' questions, you might group and synthesize them (to eliminate repetition) and compile a shorter list of questions that you can post in the classroom and return to throughout the year.

3. **Written Expression**

A final way to conclude this unit is to read the poem **Immigrants: First Generation** by Ijeoma Umebinyuo and have students create their own version of this poem. The poem is a tribute of sorts to the stories of immigrants and the lives they lead in America. It is a collection of short sentences, each of which offers a brief portrait of an immigrant experience, giving voice to both their outward and their potentially hidden identities. Because it is a kind of a poetry collage, it could be presented as a prose version of the **Flag of Faces** image. As an assessment, students could read the poem and then create their own series of "Here's to . . ." phrases to honor the individuals and groups that they think contribute to American identity.