Gabriel and Aluel’s Journey From Sudan

PART 6

SHOULD WE STAY OR SHOULD WE RETURN?
HOW DO WE BALANCE OUR OBLIGATIONS TO OUR COMMUNITIES, TO OUR FAMILIES, AND TO OURSELVES?

SOCIAL STUDIES ACTIVITIES

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Reader’s Theater
The Transition from War to Peace
January 9, 2005: Will there be real peace between northern and southern Sudan?

Session 2
Immigrant Remittances
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SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES FOR OTHER CONTENT AREAS

ELA
Juan Luis Guerra

Math
Immigrants, Remittances, and Western Union

Science
Invasive Species

FOCUS WORDS
Examining the Focus Words Closely
Events of Gabriel and Aluel’s Journey

1980
- Aluel is born in Fathai, southern Sudan

1982
- Gabriel, Aluel’s brother, is born

November 1990
- Fathai is attacked
- Gabriel and Aluel flee with other children

January 1991
- Aluel and Gabriel arrive at the Pinyudo Refugee Camp in Ethiopia

May 1991
- Aluel and Gabriel, with other Sudanese, are forced to flee Pinyudo

December 1991
- Aluel and Gabriel arrive at Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya

1946
- British unite northern and southern Sudan
- Northern Sudan granted greater power than the south

1956
- Sudan achieves independence

1956–1972
- First Sudanese Civil War

1972
- Addis Ababa Agreement

1983
- Nimeiri declares Sudan a Muslim state
- Dinka leader John Garang (a Christian) establishes the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA)
- Second Sudanese Civil War breaks out

1991
- Ethiopian government overthrown
- New government breaks relations with SPLA, expels Sudanese refugees

September 11, 2001
- Terrorist group al-Qaeda attacks the U.S.

January 2005
- Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed in Sudan, ending the war between the Muslim northerners and the Christian southerners

January 2011
- Election to determine if Sudan should split into two countries

July 11, 2011
- South Sudan is established as an independent nation, under the leadership of Dinka Salva Kiir

December 2013
- Conflicts between Dinka and Nuer over political power in South Sudan become violent

February 2000
- Aluel and Gabriel are given U.S. visas

March 2000
- Aluel and Gabriel arrive in Minneapolis, where they will learn English and attend college

January 2011
- Aluel and Gabriel travel to Virginia to vote in the election for southern independence

July 2012
- Aluel and Gabriel travel to newly independent South Sudan to visit family
January 2005: Should John stay in the U.S. or return to Sudan?

Setting: A group of friends get together at the Flamingo Ethiopian Restaurant in St. Paul, Minnesota, a meeting place for immigrants and refugees from all over the world, especially Africa.

Laura: So, John, you’re really going back to Sudan?
John: Yes, but I’m going back to a peaceful Sudan! A peace agreement was just signed between northern and southern Sudan. Our leader, John Garang, has invited many of the displaced to come home and rebuild the region.

Kamal: But John, that peace agreement is just a piece of paper. You don’t know what you’re really going back to and your country’s been at war forever. That’s why you’re here in the first place.

John: True, but I feel hopeful that this agreement is real. I have to credit both the SPLA and the government of Khartoum – the capital of Sudan – on finally coming together to institute peace. I’m hoping that this is truly the event that will help us transcend our differences. So I do feel I have an obligation to go back and invest in the future of my homeland. They need engineers like me to build and rebuild.

Kamal: Well, I’m staying here. There is no way I can go back to Lebanon. It’s too dangerous and I have a wife and two small kids who are all American. My wife wouldn’t move to Lebanon if I begged on my knees. Also, this country has invested a lot in me and so I owe the U.S. a great deal. I’m doing cutting edge research at the nanoSTAR Institute at the University of Virginia on robotics.

Dinora: That sounds very cool, Kamal! We use robotics in the surgical department at the hospital where I’m working.
Kamal: That’s awesome...
Dinora: It’s amazing the kind of precision they have with the most delicate of surgeries. But you know everyone, I’m in a bit of a quandary myself.

John: Quandary?
Dinora: Dilemma.

John: Gotcha.
Dinora: I’m supposed to go back to Brazil to practice the specialized medical training I got here in the U.S. and train others. But I’m thinking of staying and trying to get a job here.

John: Why? Don’t they need your expertise back in Brazil?
Dinora: Sure they do but people in the medical field are really badly paid there. And there are plenty of doctors in my city so there’s a lot of competition.

John: You should come to Juba with me! We need more doctors.
Dinora: I’m torn about staying here. I can make a lot more money and advance my career here. Plus, I feel like I should give back to the U.S. I’m grateful that I was able to get such a good education here.

John: That’s a good point; I hadn’t thought of it that way. I guess I do owe the U.S. for taking me in when I was seeking refuge. But don’t you feel more of an obligation to your family and to your country?

Dinora: It’s very different, John. I wasn’t forced to leave my country the way you were, so I don’t know how I’d feel in your situation.

Kamal: I have relatives in Lebanon who can’t leave. They tell me to stay here and help by sending money home.

Laura: Well, I’m sort of in the situation that you’re in, but I think mine might be worse. My parents had to flee El Salvador during the civil war, and we ended up staying although we had always hoped to go home.

Kamal: But your parents sought and received political asylum, right?
Laura: We were one of the lucky few that did get political asylum. So we were refugees like John and got help to settle in here in St. Paul. But we won’t go back to El Salvador even though there is a new leader, like John Garang in Sudan, who fought in the war.

John: But if it’s better, why do you feel as though you can’t go back?

Laura: Well, there is a huge amount of crime and there aren’t many jobs. Like most Salvadorans and like Kamal, my parents have been sending remittances, or money, to our relatives since we left. Did you know that remittances from the U.S. average about three billion dollars a year to El Salvador? That’s about one-sixth of El Salvador’s actual economy.

John: Wow. Maybe I would have a greater impact on the rebuilding efforts in Sudan by a getting a good job in the U.S. and sending money home. Now I don’t know what to do!

Kamal: Well, as I see it there are obligations everywhere: to our countries of birth, to our adopted nations, to our communities, to our families, and to ourselves. Is there a right answer to whether or not John should stay or go? I’m not sure...

TURN AND TALK: What would you do if you were in John’s shoes? Would you return? Or would you feel obligated to pay back the country that invested in you and gave you safe haven?
The 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA)

After 22 years of conflict and 4 million displaced persons, a peace agreement was finally signed between northern and southern Sudan in 2005. This document, called the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), allocated a term of six years for a slow transition of government until southern Sudan could vote on whether or not to become an independent nation. In the four years after the agreement was signed in 2005, it is estimated that about 1.9 million of those displaced returned home. Sixty percent of those seeking a return to their place of origin were between the ages of one and 17.

Read the words that John Garang, the head of the SPLA, spoke about the joy he felt at the ceremony where the CPA with Khartoum was signed. He specifically credited the northern Sudanese for their cooperation.

“With this peace agreement, we have ended the longest war in Africa – 39 years of two wars since August 1955 out of 50 years of our independence. And if we add the 11 years of Anyanya II, then Sudan had been at war within itself for 49 years, which is the whole of its independence period.

With this peace agreement, the SPLM and the National Congress Party government have brought half a century of war to a dignified end – congratulations.

With this peace agreement, there will be no more bombs falling from the sky on innocent children and women. Instead of the cries of children and the wailing of women and the pain of the last 21 years of war, peace will bless us once more with hearing the happy giggling of children and the enchanting ululation of women who are excited in happiness for one reason or another.”

But the transition from war to peace would prove to be a challenge. The implication of a signed agreement was that the fighting and killing would stop, but unfortunately, the conflict did not deescalate and the armed conflict continued.

TURN, TALK, AND WRITE: Knowing what you know about the hostilities between northern and southern Sudan, why do you think the transition to peace is so difficult?
Aluel and Gabriel heard the news about the Comprehensive Peace Agreement early on January 9th, 2005. They immediately started texting each other:

Aluel: Fortunately I am not tied down here with a husband. Now that I am a nurse, and have some skills that could be useful, I am going back as soon as possible. I want to invest in Sudan! But I would be lots happier if you came too!

Gabriel: See you there at seven, but I am not sure there is lots to celebrate yet.

Aluel: Gabriel, let’s meet tonight at the Flamingo to celebrate!

Gabriel: Aluel, be realistic. The ethnic and religious conflicts that divided us have not gone away. And petroleum profits are still not shared fairly. What if tensions escalate again? Can this document really protect the innocent people of Sudan?

Aluel: A peace agreement? Former enemies transcending their differences? A chance for us to go back and invest in our homeland? What’s not to be happy about?

Aluel: Gabriel, let’s meet tonight at the Flamingo to celebrate!

Gabriel: Aluel, be realistic. The ethnic and religious conflicts that divided us have not gone away. And petroleum profits are still not shared fairly. What if tensions escalate again? Can this document really protect the innocent people of Sudan?

Gabriel: Aluel, let’s meet tonight at the Flamingo to celebrate!

Aluel: Fortunately I am not tied down here with a husband. Now that I am a nurse, and have some skills that could be useful, I am going back as soon as possible. I want to invest in Sudan! But I would be lots happier if you came too!

Gabriel: Returning? I am staying right here, and continuing my work at the Art Institute that seeks to teach Americans about Africa and the refugee problem. Besides, remember that I am about to marry Fatima, and she would never want to return.

Aluel: You’re right, Gabriel. There is a lot of work that still needs to be done. That’s why the idea of returning is so exciting!

TURN AND TALK

Aluel is willing to uproot herself again, while Gabriel is not. Why would someone be reluctant to uproot him or herself after living somewhere for five years?
The Global Flow of Cash

Each year millions of people leave their native countries to seek opportunities in new places. Most migrant people leave behind family and friends in their home countries, although in recent years it has become increasingly convenient and affordable to stay in touch via telephone, email, video chatting, and social media. But pictures, stories, and music videos are not the only items that are exchanged between migrants and their loved ones back home. Cash, in growing amounts, is making its way around the globe as global immigration reaches new levels.

Remittances, or transfers of money back home by foreign workers, are not a new phenomenon. Ever since global travel via train and ship was made accessible to common people, foreign workers have sent money back to their home countries. But what started as bundles of cash brought home during visits or sent with friends has escalated into one of the most important sources of foreign investment in many countries. In 2012, global remittances reached an estimated $529 billion. The countries that sent the most remittances in 2011 were the United States, Saudi Arabia, and Canada, and the countries that received the most remittances were India, China, and Mexico. Many of these remittances were small amounts of money sent as wire transfers through companies like Western Union or MoneyGram.

Economists credit the escalation of remittances with improving the quality of life for many people in developing countries by giving them money to buy food, pay for medicine, and spend on everyday items like clothes. But others argue remittance money could be put to better use. These experts have noticed that foreign workers are beginning to pool their money together to invest in projects that build roads and schools in their home countries. They hope that the allocation of remittances will lead to new jobs, like construction workers and teachers.

TURN AND TALK

If you sent remittances to another country, how would you want the money to be spent?
Another Consequence of Immigration

The term "brain drain" sounds pretty horrific but what it actually refers to is the draining of brain power—trained professionals—out of a country. Often people who have special technical skills leave their country of origin for better opportunities, more training, and higher salaries elsewhere. Most often, these people are doctors, scientists, and technology experts. People in these professions are highly sought after because medical, research, and technological institutions constantly need their expertise.

As of 2011, for example, more than 22% of Canadian doctors came from a foreign country and received their medical training in their countries of origin. Interestingly, the majority of those doctors came from African nations. Such professionals might emigrate to seek better salaries, but often they are seeking safety and political stability. Recruitment of foreign doctors might be a good strategy for Canada, but countries that have lost these doctors have also lost their investment and their ability to administer medical care to their own people. One estimate suggests that $13.5 billion allocated for medical training has been lost to medical personnel emigrating to work in Canada, the United States, Britain, and Australia.

Poorer countries need their trained professionals, like doctors and scientists, to invest their skills to improve their own societies. The loss of this knowledge and training interferes with a country’s ability to develop and take care of its own people. For example, in 2010 there were 2.1 doctors per 100,000 people in Canada but only 0.3 doctors per 100,000 people in Sudan. When countries like the U.S. and Canada institute policies to recruit these foreign professionals, it is referred to as “brain gain,” while those who lose their professionals suffer from a “brain drain.”

But some companies complain that there is a different kind of brain drain occurring right here in the United States. Top U.S. universities give scholarships to bright and hardworking foreign students who then are often unable to obtain visas allowing them to stay once they graduate. They return home, taking their skills with them. Meanwhile, because there are not enough qualified people trained in the United States, many companies, universities, and hospitals end up recruiting from other nations.

TURN AND TALK

If a country invests time and money to train someone in a specialized profession, is that person morally obligated to stay in that country and practice their profession or should they leave for better opportunities?
January 2011: Elections for the Future of Sudan

Aluel and Gabriel were exhausted after their trip from Alexandria, Virginia, back to St. Paul, but they had never felt happier. Thousands of former Lost Boys and Girls had descended on various voting places around the United States to cast their votes for freedom. Through a referendum vote where 3 million votes were cast, 99 percent of southern Sudanese voters voted for independence. The Sudanese diaspora around the world and the displaced within the country were on the road to becoming citizens of the newest nation on earth. Although there were differences to transcend and decisions to be made, particularly how the region’s oil wealth would be allocated and what to name their new country, nothing could stop Aluel, Gabriel, and their friends and family from celebrating the inspiring event.

There was a party waiting for Aluel and Gabriel at the Flamingo the night after they returned from their trip. The owners, Shegitu and Frewoini, had known Aluel and Gabriel and many of their Sudanese counterparts since their arrival over 10 years earlier. So many refugees credited the restaurant owners’ warmth and food for sustaining them over the years. Aluel, Gabriel, and Fatima hugged them both and recounted the details of their trip.

As Aluel moved through a sea of blue, gold, white, and green balloons – representing the colors planned for the new South Sudanese flag – she heard similar questions being discussed at every table. “What does this mean for you?” “Will you go back now?” “Have you had any news of your family in Sudan?” “What institutions will South Sudan need?” “How will the new nation secure the investments it needs?” Aluel was glad that she had been working with the organization Doctors Without Borders for the last few years. She had been seeking experiences and knowledge to prepare herself for precisely this moment.

Aluel realized that the resolution of the hostilities in Sudan had created a new reality, but that the Lost Boys and Girls in the Sudanese diaspora had their new realities too. They were adults, with families and jobs. They had invested a lot of time in adapting to their new communities, and while many would want to go back, others would no doubt decide they could not now transcend the differences between their new lives and life in South Sudan. One last unresolved issue for many, though, was finding out what had happened to their family members. Perhaps that would be enough to convince Gabriel at least to visit!

TURN AND TALK

Think about trying to build a stable new nation. What would you argue would be the most important institution to invest in? Would you prioritize schools, banks, police, government offices, or something else?
Write a headline that would demonstrate a human rights violation of each article.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UDHR Simplified</th>
<th>Headline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Article 22</strong> Everyone has the right to make the most of all the advantages (culture, work, social welfare) that are necessary for personal development and freedom</td>
<td><strong>City Education Budget Slashed: Art and Physical Education Are No Longer Part of School</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Article 23</strong> You have the right to work, to be free to choose your work, and to get a salary which allows you to support your family. If a man and a woman do the same work, they should get the same pay. All people who work have the right to join together to defend their interests.</td>
<td><strong>Women Truck Drivers Paid Less than their Male Counterparts</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Article 24</strong> Each work day should not be too long, since everyone has the right to rest and should be able to take regular paid holidays.</td>
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<td><strong>Article 25</strong> You have the right to have whatever you need so that you and your family: do not fall ill or go hungry; have clothes and a house; and are helped if you are out of work, if you are ill, if you are old, if your wife or husband is dead, or if you do not earn a living for any other reason that you cannot help. Mothers and their children are entitled to special care. All children have the same rights to be protected, whether or not their mother was married when they were born.</td>
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<td><strong>Article 27</strong> You have the right to share in your community's arts and sciences, and any good they do. Your works as an artist, writer, or scientist should be protected, and you should be able to benefit from them.</td>
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NGO stands for non-governmental organization. They do some of the things that governments might do – provide medical care, start schools, invest in businesses, help people allocate resources – but they are explicitly NOT governmental. Doctors Without Borders is one NGO you have already read about. Here are a few more that operated in Sudan during the war and in southern Sudan before the establishment of its government. Some are still there, whereas in other cases the government has taken over their crucial functions.

**Kiva**

Kiva is committed to the notion that people everywhere in the world will improve their own economic situations if given a little help. Kiva organizes “microloans” – opportunities for individuals to allocate small amounts of money – as little as $25 – to borrowers who can invest those funds in productive ways. For example, a Sudanese farmer may use a microloan to buy a goat. Selling milk from the goat enables the farmer to buy seeds and plant a field. That generates more money, and soon the farmer’s family has enough to buy food and pay school fees. Or a Sudanese widow might buy a cell phone with her microloan, and then collect fees from her neighbors who use her phone. Kiva administers the loans, operating on the notion that a small investment can create a huge payoff.

www.kiva.org

**The Carter Center**

Jimmy Carter was the U.S. President from 1977–1981. After he lost the 1980 election to Ronald Reagan, he started The Carter Center, an NGO focused on advancing human rights. The Carter Center tries to address problems that other NGOs are not working on. For example, it has essentially eliminated the guinea worm and greatly reduced river blindness in two of its campaigns. In South Sudan, though, it has focused on providing support to those building a new democratic nation and democratic institutions, so that all people can participate in government.

www.cartercenter.org

**Save the Children**

Save the Children promotes children’s health and welfare in many ways, including through education, health, and food services. By helping children, it also helps families. In South Sudan and elsewhere in Africa, it has focused on supporting local education efforts by instituting its programs Literacy Boost and Numeracy Boost.

www.savethechildren.org

**Artists Striving To End Poverty (ASTEP)**

ASTEP is committed to the notion that children need the arts in their lives to transcend poverty. ASTEP recruits artists to help them give children opportunities for music education and participation in drama and dance. It credits arts training for improvements in critical thinking, emotional maturity, and interest in staying in school. ASTEP has been working in South Africa, and now has plans to expand into other parts of Africa, including perhaps Sudan and South Sudan.

www.astep.org

Though each of these NGOs has a number of missions, the main focus of each organization is described above. Go back to the articles in the Declaration of Human Rights you read yesterday, and figure out which of the articles is most relevant to the work of each NGO. Do this on your own first, then share your answers with a partner and discuss any discrepancies.
The newest nation on earth was born on Saturday, July 9, 2011 after years of conflict that cost millions of lives and displaced millions more. Elections had been held in April and Salva Kiir, the former head of the rebel group the SPLA, had won with 93% of the vote. Kiir was sworn into office a month later by the new minister of justice who administered the oath at a ceremony filled with foreign officials and dignitaries from around the world. Kiir publicly promised that he would not rule, but instead serve the people of South Sudan and promote peace and development. He invited all present to invest in his new nation.

After independence was declared that morning, crowds of new citizens began singing, dancing, and chanting “freedom” in the streets of the new capital, Juba, and in cities, towns, and villages across the region. In the crowd were former refugees who had returned from many corners of the world to celebrate this moment of freedom and independence.

Although there would be days of joyful celebration, there were many challenges facing the new nation in the coming days, months, and years. South Sudan is oil rich but poor in the institutions necessary to build a strong society. There were still unresolved border disputes and questions about how the nation would allocate and administer its oil resources. There were age-old concerns about how best to transcend the many political, historical, racial, and religious divisions.

But the celebrations continued and on July 14, 2011, the world community and the United Nations Secretary-General welcomed the new country with these simple words: “Welcome, South Sudan. Welcome to the community of nations.”

TURN, TALK, AND WRITE: What do you think the following sentence means: “South Sudan is oil rich but poor in the institutions necessary to build a strong society.”

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Session 4
Debate

Should Aluel and Gabriel return to South Sudan now that it has gained independence?

**YES**
South Sudan needs young and well-educated emigrants like Gabriel and Aluel to administer its institutions, develop its economy, and transcend traditional ethnic and political differences.

**NO**
Violence could escalate in South Sudan at any time, so it is not yet a safe place to live and raise a family. Gabriel and Aluel have an obligation to contribute their skills to their new adopted home, and they can do more for South Sudan by sending remittances.

Our Team Supports (circle one):  

| YES | NO |

Notes for argument:

Notes for counterargument:

Notes for rebuttal (response to counterargument):
July 9, 2012: Aluel and Gabriel Return

Juba, South Sudan

The passengers on board Kenyan Airlines Flight #534 peered out the windows as the plane landed. They could see shimmering waves of heat rising from the black tarmac. Gabriel had an instant flashback to the heat at Kakuma and seeing shelter anywhere that cast a shadow.

As the group entered the terminal, they encountered a mass of people holding up signs for relatives, United Nations workers, and travelers associated with international companies and NGOs. Suddenly, they saw a sign that simply read “Aluel and Gabriel.” It was their cousin Jacob. Although he was refused entry to the United States after 9/11, he had received asylum in New Zealand. Now he too was returning to the newest nation on earth.

“I have a surprise for you,” said Jacob, looking suddenly very serious. Jacob walked over to an older woman who had been sitting by herself at a table and gave her his arm. As she stood up, Aluel and Gabriel cried out in disbelief. How had Jacob found their mother? Mama Ayen, as Jacob called her, had been badly injured during the attack on their village, and had barely survived. She had been taken care of by strangers until she could go to a home with other women who had been displaced. Jacob had invested many hours over the past year to determine if she was alive. He finally got confirmation that Ayen had been located by the International Office of Migration.

Aluel and Gabriel were overjoyed. Although they would all be going in different directions soon, for the next week they would be together as a family. Aluel, who was working for the NGO Doctors Without Borders, would stay and train medical personnel in the rural areas for the next year. Fatima and Gabriel would return to St. Paul, where they could help fundraise to rebuild essential South Sudanese institutions. Jacob would live in Juba to help with reconstruction. Aluel looked around at her immediate and extended family and thought about how much they had all been able to transcend over these many years of flight and survival. The thrill of being a citizen of the newest country on earth suddenly overwhelmed her.

TURN AND TALK

Who do you think will contribute the most to South Sudan over the next few years – Jacob working on building roads and energy plants, Aluel training medical personnel, or Gabriel raising money to support South Sudanese institutions?
Writing

What obligations do we have to our communities of origin?

Aluel and Gabriel made very different decisions after South Sudan became independent. Aluel decided to return and help rebuild the new nation while Gabriel decided to stay in the United States.

Take on the perspective of either Aluel or Gabriel and write a letter to Mr. Landers, their former ESL teacher, explaining your decision to return or to stay. Include as many focus words as you can to make sure Mr. Landers can see how sophisticated your English has become.

Dear Mr. Landers,

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Juan Luis Guerra

Singer, Bandleader, Songwriter, and Producer

Juan Luis Guerra has sold more than 30 million records and has won Grammys and Latin Grammys as a singer, bandleader, songwriter, and producer. His work incorporates many musical strands—merengue, jazz, balada, salsa, gospel, and more. He has recorded songs in Spanish, English, and even Arawak, a native Caribbean language.

Born in 1957 in the Dominican Republic, Guerra went to university to study philosophy and literature. But then he switched to studying music, luckily for us all. After some time at El Conservatorio Nacional de Música de Santo Domingo, he went to Boston, Massachusetts, to study at the Berklee College of Music.

Though many of Guerra’s songs are about love, he also reveals his early interest in philosophy and social issues in some of his music. For example, his song El costo de la vida (The Cost of Living) is a commentary on poverty and the unequal distribution of income.

He also wrote about the topic of displacement and the many people from the Dominican Republic and other places who have to migrate to other countries to seek a living. One of his songs is called Visa para un sueño (Visa to a Dream). The verses go through the hours of the day (“It was five in the morning,” “It was seven in the morning,” and so on), describing the visa-seekers standing in line, waiting as the sun grows hotter and hotter:

**Eran las siete de la mañana**  
y uno por uno al matadero

It was seven in the morning  
and one by one to the slaughterhouse

The refrain goes like this:

**Buscando visa, la necesidad**  
buscando visa, qué rabia me da  
buscando visa, golpe de poder  
buscando visa, qué mas puedo hacer

**Seeking a visa, a necessity**  
**seeking** a visa, it makes me so angry  
**seeking** a visa, seizing power  
**seeking** a visa, what else can I do

**TURN AND TALK**

Check out the full song lyrics online, both in Spanish and in various English translations. Which lines in this song best express the attitude of the writer toward the necessity of seeking a visa to reach one’s dreams? Can you identify aspects of the lyrics that work much better in Spanish than in English? (If you don’t speak Spanish, try working with a Spanish-speaking classmate or listening to the song as it is sung by Guerra to get a sense of the rhythm and rhymes in the original.) Try improving on the translation!
Immigrants, Remittances, and Western Union

Essential service or a means of exploitation?

In 2007, a group of immigrants protested outside of a Western Union meeting in New York City, seeking increased responsibility from the company. Western Union is the world’s largest money transfer company, transferring about one out of every five dollars that is sent worldwide. Part of the reason it controls so much money is its enormous presence and visibility. For every McDonald’s restaurant in the world, there are 15 Western Union locations. That’s almost 500,000 Western Union agents worldwide.

Western Union charges an average of 9% for small remittances, which means that a $100 money transfer will cost the customer $9. Larger remittances usually cost less money to send, but immigrants in low-paying jobs are often unable to save money in large quantities. In 2011, Western Union transferred almost $80 billion in remittances and made over a billion dollars in profits. Many immigrants feel that Western Union should reinvest some of their profits in immigrant communities since they are some of the company’s most important customers.

As both remittance fees and the number of money transfers escalate worldwide, new companies are seeking a share of the remittance market, and doing so in a responsible way. These companies are using the internet and other technology to transcend the obstacles that make transferring money so expensive, passing along the savings to their customers. Additionally, an increasing number of these companies are allocating a portion of every remittance payment to projects in developing countries.

Answer the following questions about percentages and averages.

1. Maria sent $100 to her mother in Mexico. She was charged $12.50 to send the remittance and an extra $2 since the money had to be converted from U.S. dollars to Mexican pesos. What percentage of the remittance did Maria pay as a fee?

2. Kosoko sent $500 to his family in Nigeria. When averaged, the percentage that Maria and Kosoko paid equaled 9%.
   a. Write an equation that would allow you to solve for the percentage that Kosoko paid.
   b. Solve for the percentage that Kosoko paid.
   c. How much was Kosoko’s fee?

TURN AND TALK

Should businesses like Western Union be expected to invest money in developing countries or immigrant communities? Why or why not?
SCIENCE

Invasive Species

Global Migrants from the Plant and Animal Kingdoms

In our globalized world, people and products move around at a dizzying pace. Clothes made in India are sold in Norway. Bananas grown in Colombia are eaten in Canada. As products and people move around the world, they often take plants and animals along for the ride. Some species thrive in new environments. They reproduce until their populations escalate to unhealthy levels, driving out native populations and causing billions of dollars in damage. Such species are called invasive species. Below are two examples of invasive species found around the world.

Zebra Mussel

Zebra mussels are native to bodies of water located along the Europe/Asia border. They get their name from the striped pattern that often appears on their small, D-shaped shells. Zebra mussels have become an invasive species in many parts of the world. They were brought to North America in water stored at the bottom of large ships, and were first discovered in the Great Lakes in 1988. Populations have now spread to the Mississippi River. Each year a female zebra mussel can produce almost a million microscopic eggs. Once the mussels develop shells, they can clog water systems. Additionally, sharp shells are a hazard for people swimming in lakes, as they can cut the bottom of their feet. Finally, zebra mussels filter lake water by eating plankton, pushing some native species to the brink of extinction while causing other populations to explode. Billions of dollars are allocated each year to repair damage caused by zebra mussels. Scientists are developing ways to control zebra mussel populations by administering chemicals that will eliminate zebra mussels without harming other living things in the surrounding ecosystem. Most efforts currently focus on preventing the spread of zebra mussels by educating the public.

Chinaberry Tree

The chinaberry tree is native to Asia and northern Australia. Many people in Asia credit the tree with having healing properties. It was brought to the southeastern United States in the 1830s, by people seeking a colorful tree that would also provide shade. It can now be found as far west as Texas. The chinaberry tree grows quickly and densely, pushing out native species. Chinaberry seeds, bark, and leaves are poisonous to humans and domestic animals like cats, dogs, horses, and cows. Decaying chinaberry leaves change the chemistry of the soil around them, making it difficult for other plants to grow. Birds help to spread chinaberry trees by eating their fruits and expelling seeds in their droppings. Chinaberry trees are controlled by pulling up young trees and putting special chemicals on the stumps of larger trees.

TURN AND TALK

There are many restrictions on what kinds of fruits and vegetables you can take on international flights. How do these restrictions help limit the spread of invasive species?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOCUS WORD OR RELATED FORM</th>
<th>DEFINITION</th>
<th>SAMPLE SENTENCE</th>
<th>TURN AND TALK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>allocate (verb)</td>
<td>to set aside for a particular purpose</td>
<td>Chi will <strong>allocate</strong> 20% of her allowance to school lunch.</td>
<td>To which budget should the government <strong>allocate</strong> more money: education or defense? Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*allocation (noun)</td>
<td>an amount determined for a particular purpose</td>
<td>Samantha’s time <strong>allocation</strong> for exercise is 45 minutes a day.</td>
<td>What is a fair <strong>allocation</strong> of student time for homework each night? Should it be the same for all students?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>invest (verb)</td>
<td>to devote money, time, or energy toward something in order to receive a later gain</td>
<td>Steve has <strong>invested</strong> 10 years into his friendship with Joseph.</td>
<td>College offers the opportunity to <strong>invest</strong> in your future. What would you want to study in college?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transcend (verb)</td>
<td>to go above or move beyond</td>
<td>Sometimes fans of different baseball teams are unable to <strong>transcend</strong> their rivalries to become friends.</td>
<td>What problem do you wish the world could <strong>transcend</strong>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>administer (verb)</td>
<td>to manage or be responsible for; to give out</td>
<td>Professor Stynes will <strong>administer</strong> the final examination in chemistry.</td>
<td>Should a doctor be allowed to <strong>administer</strong> lethal drugs to help certain patients commit suicide?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>credit (verb, noun)</td>
<td>(v) to acknowledge someone or something; (n) an approved amount that will be paid at a later time</td>
<td>In her speech to the returning soldiers, Mayor Flanders <strong>credited</strong> them for helping victims of the tornado.</td>
<td>Who would you <strong>credit</strong> for helping you learn a skill or talent?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>institute (verb)</td>
<td>to establish or start something new</td>
<td>Governor Babjak promised to <strong>institute</strong> quality health care for all state residents.</td>
<td>If you were to <strong>institute</strong> a new school policy, what would it be? Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*institution (noun)</td>
<td>an organization founded for a certain purpose; an established practice in society</td>
<td>Students visited several banks and other financial <strong>institutions</strong> to learn about money management.</td>
<td>The <strong>institution</strong> of learning has traditionally been centered in attending classes. Technology is changing things. What are your thoughts about learning online from home?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seek (verb)</td>
<td>to look for or try to get</td>
<td>“Hide and <strong>Seek</strong>” is a childhood game that’s been played for generations.</td>
<td>When you are upset about something, who do you <strong>seek</strong> out to help you feel better?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>escalate (verb)</td>
<td>to increase rapidly; to make greater</td>
<td>The city police were afraid that the angry protest might <strong>escalate</strong> into a riot.</td>
<td>What are some helpful strategies to lessen the chance of a disagreement <strong>escalating</strong> into a fight?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*escalation (noun)</td>
<td>an increase to a higher level</td>
<td>The <strong>escalation</strong> of movie ticket sales made Iron Man III a major blockbuster hit.</td>
<td>What should be done about the <strong>escalation</strong> of tuition at many schools in the United States?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>