



Lesson One

Pursuing the American Dream: An Evolving Ideal

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Pursuing the American Dream

Lesson One: An Evolving Ideal

SUMMARY

Student outcome: Students will explain the historical variations of the American Dream and define their personal American Dream using citation, description, and elaboration, as well as the language of compare and contrast.

Reading: *American Dream Cards*

Lesson duration: 3–4 hours

Content vocabulary:

- aspire/aspiration
- pursue/pursuit
- acquire/acquisition
- seek/sought
- hold/held
- gain
- endow
- achieve/achievement
- freedom
- wealth
- opportunity
- promise
- circumstance

Functional language patterns:

According to _____, the American Dream is the pursuit of ...

The _____ movement sought to .../held the belief that ...

To acquire the American Dream, _____ aspired to ...

Although _____ sought ... , _____ was in pursuit of ...

The comparison reveals that ...

LESSON SEQUENCE

		Purpose	Process	Tools
Activity #1	I DO/ WE DO	Open the lesson Establish expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish context for new learning ▪ Link contextual understanding to key concept ▪ Review expected outcomes 	Quotation <i>Summative Writing Prompt Poster</i> Sentence frames <i>Student Workbooks</i>
Activity #2–3	I DO/WE DO	Introduce key concept Model and practice target vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Build on prior knowledge ▪ Define critical terms ▪ Oral language practice in partners 	<i>Lesson One Idea Web</i> <i>Talking Chips</i> <i>Verb Form Chart</i> <i>Laminated Notebook Paper Posters</i> <i>Student Workbooks</i>
Activity #4	I DO/WE DO/ YOU DO	Understand a critical concept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Preview text ▪ Facilitate guided reading ▪ Model structured note-taking 	<i>American Dream Cards</i> <i>Timeline Note Taker</i> <i>Classroom Timer</i> <i>Student Workbooks</i>
Activity #5–6	I DO/WE DO/ YOU DO	Analyze text Apply learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Summarize reading ▪ Practice use of compare and contrast language ▪ Engage in small group discussion ▪ Draft a short written response 	<i>American Dream Cards</i> <i>Timeline Note Taker</i> <i>Text-to-Text Matrix</i> <i>CM Student Flipbooks</i> <i>Classroom Timer</i> <i>Ticket Out the Door</i> <i>Student Workbooks</i> Teacher-made sample paragraph and drafting template (optional)
Activity #7–8	YOU DO	Demonstrate comprehension Extend learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Revisit summative task ▪ Review target language ▪ Apply content to personal circumstances ▪ Share responses 	<i>CM Discussion Cards</i> <i>My American Dream Card</i> <i>Summative Prompt Poster</i> <i>Classroom Timer</i> <i>Student Workbooks</i> Teacher-made word bank



Find the corresponding *Student Workbook* page numbers for Lesson One materials:

American Dream Cards, pgs. 3–11	Timeline Note Taker, p. 16
Lesson One Idea Web, p. 13	Text-to-Text Matrix, p. 17
Verb Form Charts, pgs. 14–15	My American Dream Card, p. 19

Lesson One

Outcome: **Students will explain the historical variations of the American Dream and define their personal American Dream using citation, description and elaboration, as well as the language of compare and contrast.**

INSTRUCTIONAL SEQUENCE	MATERIALS
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Open the Lesson and Establish Expectations (*I Do/We Do*) 15–20 minutes

ACTIVITY #1: In this activity, students will examine the concept of the American Dream and be introduced to the unit’s summative task.

Using an overhead or document camera, post or project the following quotation by James T. Adams:

“... the American dream, that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone with opportunity according to his ability or achievement ... a dream in which each man and each woman should ... be recognized by others for what they are, regardless of birth or position.”

Quotation, posted or projected

Ask students to copy the quote into their notes while reading it to themselves quietly. When ready, slowly read the quote aloud, highlighting or underlining the following phrases:

- “life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone”
- “according to his ability or achievement”
- “regardless of birth or position”

Direct the class to consider what the quote is telling us about the American Dream. Prompt them by asking: *What is the promise of the American Dream? Who can achieve the American Dream? What does it take to achieve the American Dream?*

Call on volunteers and non-volunteers. Jot ideas and notes into the margins beside the quote as you capture students’ responses. Expand on their ideas as they offer suggestions.

The quote is displayed in a green box. Handwritten notes in red, green, and purple ink are written in the margins with arrows pointing to specific parts of the quote. The red notes include "the promise is a better life" pointing to "life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone" and "equal opportunity" pointing to "with opportunity according to his ability or achievement ...". The green note says "everyone can pursue the American Dream" pointing to "a dream in which each man and each woman should ...". The purple note says "the dream is based on effort" pointing to "regardless of birth or position."

Bring the conversation to a close by posting the following sentence frame and developing a few sentences as a whole class.

Sentence frames, posted or projected

The American Dream is a dream of /for/ based on/about _____ and _____.

Demonstrate how to use the ideas from the annotated quote to complete the frame. Completed sentences might include:

- The American Dream is a dream of opportunity and a better life.
- The American Dream is a dream based on effort and hard work.
- The American Dream is a dream for everyone and about achievement.

Make sure students copy the sentences into their notes.