

10.2.2**Lesson 4****Introduction**

In this lesson, students read and analyze paragraphs 12–15 of “A Genetics of Justice” (from “The day came when my mother had to march” to “the man who had ruled her imagination most of her life”), in which Alvarez describes her mother’s forced participation in a parade of women honoring Trujillo. Students explore how Alvarez develops central ideas of trauma and freedom through her recreated version of her mother’s experiences. Students engage in an evidence-based discussion that culminates in a Quick Write on the following prompt: How do paragraphs 12–15 develop and refine a central idea introduced earlier in the text? For homework, students review, organize and expand their notes in preparation for the Mid-Unit Assessment.

Standards

| Assessed Standard(s) | |
|-----------------------|---|
| RI.9-10.5 | Analyze in detail how an author’s ideas or claims are developed and refined by particular sentences, paragraphs, or larger portions of a text (e.g., a section or chapter). |
| Addressed Standard(s) | |
| None. | |

Assessment

| Assessment(s) |
|---|
| <p>Student learning is assessed via a Quick Write at the end of the lesson. Students respond to the following prompt, citing textual evidence to support analysis and inferences drawn from the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do paragraphs 12–15 develop and refine a central idea introduced earlier in the text? |
| High Performance Response(s) |
| <p>A High Performance Response should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a central idea of the text (e.g., freedom, trauma, etc.) Demonstrate how paragraphs 12–15 develop the central idea identified (e.g., in paragraphs 12–15, Alvarez develops the central idea of freedom by shifting between her mother’s account of the |

parade and her own imagination of events. As her mother tells the story, the parade is a painful and humiliating experience: “her feet were swollen and hurting” and “she was sure she was going to faint” (par. 12). In Alvarez’s imagination, however, the experience of the parade frees her mother from trauma because it allows her mother to “see what she cannot yet imagine” (par. 14). Alvarez’s mother is freed from her fear of “the man who had ruled her imagination most of her life,” as Trujillo becomes nothing more than “a short, plump man, sweating profusely in his heavy dress uniform” (par. 14)).

Vocabulary

Vocabulary to provide directly (will not include extended instruction)

- resuscitate (verb) – revive, especially from apparent death or unconsciousness
- rivulets (n.) – small streams; streamlets; brooks
- venerate (v.) – regard or treat with reverence, a feeling or attitude of deep respect

Vocabulary to teach (may include direct word work and/or questions)

- None.

Lesson Agenda/Overview

| Student-Facing Agenda | % of Lesson |
|---|--|
| Standards & Text: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard: RI.9-10.5 • Text: “A Genetics of Justice,” by Julia Alvarez, paragraphs 12–15 | |
| Learning Sequence: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction of Lesson Agenda 2. Homework Accountability 3. Masterful Reading 4. Reading and Discussion 5. Quick Write 6. Closing | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 5% 2. 10% 3. 10% 4. 55% 5. 15% 6. 5% |

Materials

- Student copies of the Central Ideas Tracking Tool (refer to 10.2.1 Lesson 5)—Students may need blank copies of the tool if they have run out of space on their original tool.
- Student copies of the Short Response Rubric and Checklist (refer to 10.2.1 Lesson 1)

Learning Sequence

| How to Use the Learning Sequence | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Symbol | Type of Text & Interpretation of the Symbol |
| 10% | Percentage indicates the percentage of lesson time each activity should take. |
| no symbol | Plain text indicates teacher action. |
| | Bold text indicates questions for the teacher to ask students. |
| | <i>Italicized text indicates a vocabulary word.</i> |
| ► | Indicates student action(s). |
| 💬 | Indicates possible student response(s) to teacher questions. |
| ❗ | Indicates instructional notes for the teacher. |

Activity 1: Introduction of Lesson Agenda

5%

Begin by reviewing the agenda and assessed standard for this lesson: RI.9-10.5. In this lesson, students explore how Alvarez uses point of view to develop a central idea of the text. Students engage in evidence-based discussion as well as complete a brief writing assignment to close the lesson.

- Students look at the agenda.

Activity 2: Homework Accountability

10%

Instruct students to talk in pairs about how they applied their focus standard to their text. Lead a brief share out on the previous lesson's AIR homework assignment. Select several students (or student pairs) to explain how they applied their focus standard to their AIR text.

- Students (or student pairs) discuss and share how they applied their focus standard to their AIR text.

Activity 3: Masterful Reading**10%**

Have students listen to a Masterful Reading of paragraphs 12–15 of “A Genetics of Justice.” Ask students to follow along and listen for details that indicate a change in point of view.

- ▶ Students follow along, reading silently.

Activity 4: Reading and Discussion**55%**

Instruct students to form small groups. Post or project each set of questions below for students to discuss.

Instruct student groups to reread paragraphs 12–13 (from “The day came when my mother had to march” to “and what she sees makes it all worthwhile, somehow”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

What is the impact of Alvarez’s choice to begin paragraph 12 with “[t]he day came”?

- ☞ It creates the sense of something that has been expected or dreaded for a long time and has finally arrived.

What is the impact of Alvarez’s statement that her mother “had” to march?

- ☞ It reminds the reader that marching is not a choice, and that there would be consequences to refusing to march.

How does Alvarez use specific word choices to emphasize the length of the parade?

- ☞ Student responses may include
 - Alvarez states that “[t]he parade went on for hours.”
 - Alvarez adds the word *finally* in the phrase “[f]inally . . . the grandstand came into sight.”

Analyze Alvarez’s use of descriptive language and details to describe her mother’s experience of marching.

- ☞ Student responses may include:
 - Alvarez notes that the sun was “hot” and that her mother “was sure she was going to faint.”
 - Alvarez describes her mother’s dress as “damp with sweat” in the “hot sun.”
 - Alvarez adds the detail that her mother’s feet were “swollen and hurting.”

What is the impact of Alvarez’s description of “a clutter of dress uniforms, a vague figure on the podium”?

- ☞ This description is the view of someone who is viewing the parade from far away. It creates a sense of vagueness and distance. It shows that Alvarez’s mother is too far away to see those around Trujillo as anything other than “a clutter of dress uniforms” and Trujillo himself is merely “a vague figure on the podium.”

Provide students the following definitions: *resuscitate* means “revive, especially from apparent death or unconsciousness”; *venerate* means “regard or treat with reverence; a feeling or attitude of deep respect.”

- ▶ Students write the definitions of *resuscitate* and *venerate* on their texts or in a vocabulary journal.

How does Alvarez’s statement “there is a scene I imagine that she has not told me about” impact your understanding of the memories in paragraph 12?

- ☞ The memories in paragraph 12 are memories that Alvarez’s mother has shared with her.

How does the statement “there is a scene I imagine that she has not told me about” impact your understanding of the details in the following paragraphs?

- ☞ Alvarez makes it clear that she is “imagining” or inventing this part of the scene because these are details her mother “has not told” her about.

① **Differentiation Consideration:** Consider posing the following optional extension question:

How does Alvarez’s use of verb tense change between paragraphs 12 and 13? What is the impact of this change?

- ☞ Student responses may include:

- Alvarez’s verbs shift from the past tense to the present.
- This change marks the shift between a historical narrative based on her mother’s memories in paragraph 12 to her own imagining of the scene.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses. Distribute or ask students to take out their copies of the Central Ideas Tracking Tool to record the central idea of “freedom” and how it develops as discussed here.

Instruct student groups to reread paragraph 14 (from “For there, no more than ten steps away” to “what she cannot yet imagine: El Jefe coming undone”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

Provide students the following definition: *rivulets* means “small streams.”

- ▶ Students write the definition of *rivulets* on their texts or in a vocabulary journal.

In the imagined scene, explain how what Alvarez’s mother sees “makes it all worthwhile.”

💬 Student responses may include:

- Alvarez’s description of Trujillo serves to reduce him from El Jefe to an ordinary, even ridiculous man: it humanizes him.
- In contrast to the “handsome young dictator” (par. 4) whose picture hung on her grandparents’ wall, Alvarez depicts Trujillo as “a short, plump man” (par. 14).
- Alvarez twice refers to Trujillo as sweating: he is “sweating profusely” in his uniform and there are “rivulets of sweat” on his face. This serves to make his “heavy dress uniform” and “Napoleonic hat” seem all the more ridiculous (par. 14).
- Alvarez refers to the “pancake makeup” on his face, suggesting excess and ridicule (par. 14).
- Alvarez describes the makeup being washed off Trujillo’s face by his sweat—he is literally “coming undone” (par. 14).

① **Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle, consider asking the following question:

How does Alvarez’s description of Trujillo in paragraph 14 recall specific details from earlier in the text?

💬 Student responses may include:

- Alvarez’s description of Trujillo recalls many details of the “cautionary tales” that her mother used to tell about Trujillo.
- Trujillo’s medal collection (par. 7) is evidence of his “megalomania” and earned him the nickname “Chapita”: “The medals on his chest flash brightly in the hot sun so that he looks as if he has caught on fire.”
- Trujillo’s “Napoleonic hat” recalls Alvarez’s mother’s tales of his excessive vanity in paragraph 8: “plumes for his Napoleonic hats were purchased in Paris and shipped in vacuum-packed boxes to the Island.”
- The description of Trujillo’s smeared makeup recalls a detail from earlier in the text about “how [Trujillo] disguised his own Haitian ancestry, how he lightened his skin with makeup” (par. 5).

What reason does Alvarez give for “invent[ing]” such a scene? How does this reason relate to the final sentence of paragraph 13?

💬 Student responses may include:

- Alvarez wants her mother “to see what she cannot yet imagine: El Jefe coming undone” (par. 14). In other words, she wants her mother to see Trujillo as human and somewhat ridiculous. She wants to destroy for her mother the image of El Jefe as all-powerful.
- It is seeing “El Jefe coming undone,” realizing that he is just a man, that “makes it all worthwhile,” as Alvarez states at the end of paragraph 13.

What does Alvarez mean by the phrase “coming undone” at the end of paragraph 14?

- 💬 The phrase “coming undone” (par. 14) suggests falling apart, and possibly losing power.

In the imagined scene, how does Alvarez’s mother “see[ing] what she cannot yet imagine” develop the central ideas of trauma and freedom?

- 💬 By “see[ing] what she cannot yet imagine,” Alvarez’s mother is able to free herself from her fear of Trujillo and heal from the trauma of living under his rule.
- 💬 This shows how such imagined memories can be a healing process.

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses. Ask students to use their Central Ideas Tracking Tool to record the development of central ideas as discussed here.

Instruct student groups to reread paragraph 15 (from “Eventually the parade moved on, and my mother marched” to “the man who had ruled her imagination most of her life”) and answer the following questions before sharing out with the class.

Explain whether paragraph 15 is part of Alvarez’s imagined scene. Cite evidence from the text to support your explanation.

- 💬 Student responses may include:
 - Some students may respond that paragraph 15 is part of Alvarez’s imagined scene. Her mother only sees Trujillo from a distance, “a vague figure on the podium.” In paragraph 15, Alvarez writes that her mother “saw, up close, the man.”
 - Some students may note that the verb tense changes back from the present to the past tense with “[e]ventually, the parade moved on,” and suggest that paragraph 15 is not part of Alvarez’s imagined scene.
- ① Alvarez leaves a certain ambiguity in the text as to whether paragraph 15 is part of the imagined scene or not, and students may choose to interpret the text either way. If time allows, consider exploring this ambiguity with students, and encouraging them to explain why they came to their conclusions. Consider explaining to students that respectful disagreement around points of ambiguity can be fruitful.

In Alvarez’s imagined scene, how does her mother’s view of Trujillo change after seeing him “up close”?

- 💬 Alvarez’s mother no longer sees Trujillo as the larger-than-life, all-powerful figure who has “ruled her imagination most of her life”; she now sees him as a ridiculous and vain man (par. 15).

What is the impact of Alvarez’s use of “up close” to describe her mother seeing Trujillo?

- 💬 Alvarez’s mother had to see him as he really is before she could imagine him differently.

① **Differentiation Consideration:** If students struggle, consider posing the following questions:

How has Alvarez’s mother “seen” Trujillo, literally and figuratively, before the parade?

- 💬 Student responses may include:

- Alvarez’s mother has seen Trujillo in the portrait that her parents had on the wall, as “a kind of “movie star” (par. 3).
- Alvarez’s mother has seen Trujillo through her husband’s eyes and in her own imagination as a “cold-blooded monster” (par. 5).

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses.

Instruct student groups to reread paragraphs 12–15 and answer the following question before sharing out with the class.

How does Alvarez use her imagined view of Trujillo to develop a central idea in paragraphs 12–15?

- 💬 Student responses may include:

- Alvarez develops the central idea of trauma by showing the pain and humiliation her mother and others suffer marching in the parade: “had to march,” “went on for hours in the hot sun until my mother was sure she was going to faint,” “feet were swollen and hurting,” “thought she could not go one more step,” etc. With this vivid description, Alvarez further develops the idea that living under the dictatorship was traumatic.
- Alvarez develops the central idea of freedom by showing how her mother can be freed from Trujillo’s dictatorship. By imagining her mother’s experience Alvarez shows how her mother can be freed from the trauma and begin to heal by “see[ing] what she cannot yet imagine: El Jefe come undone” (par. 14). Before the account of the parade, Trujillo is “the man who had ruled [Alvarez’s mother’s] imagination most of her life” (par. 15); after the parade, in Alvarez’s version, Trujillo is just “a short, plump man, sweating profusely in his heavy dress uniform” (par. 14).

Lead a brief whole-class discussion of student responses. Ask students to use the Central Ideas Tracking Tool to record the development of central ideas as discussed here.

Activity 5: Quick Write

15%

Instruct students to respond briefly in writing to the following prompt:

How do paragraphs 12–15 develop and refine a central idea introduced earlier in the text?

Instruct students to look at their annotations to find evidence. Ask students to use this lesson’s vocabulary wherever possible in their written responses. Remind students to use the Short Response Rubric and Checklist to guide their written responses.

① Display the prompt for students to see, or provide the prompt in hard copy.

- ▶ Students independently answer the prompt, using evidence from the text.
- 🗣 See the High Performance Response at the beginning of this lesson.

Activity 6: Closing

5%

Display and distribute the homework assignment. For homework, instruct students to review paragraphs 1–11 (from “Perhaps because I was spared” to “that my father was planning”) and annotate for the central idea of freedom using the Central Ideas Tracking Tool from this lesson.

Also for homework, instruct students to review, organize, and expand their notes and annotations in preparation for the Mid-Unit Assessment.

- ▶ Students follow along.

Homework

Review paragraphs 1–11 and annotate for the central idea of freedom using the Central Ideas Tracking Tool from this lesson. Also, review, organize, and expand your notes and annotations in preparation for the Mid-Unit Assessment.

Model Central Ideas Tracking Tool

| | | | | | |
|--------------|--|---------------|--|--------------|--|
| Name: | | Class: | | Date: | |
|--------------|--|---------------|--|--------------|--|

Directions: Identify the central ideas that you encounter throughout the text. Trace the development of those ideas by noting how the author introduces, develops, or refines these ideas in the texts. Cite textual evidence to support your work.

| | |
|--------------|-------------------------|
| Text: | "A Genetics of Justice" |
|--------------|-------------------------|

| Paragraph # | Central Ideas | Notes and Connections |
|-------------|---------------|--|
| 12–15 | Freedom | <p>Alvarez shifts points of view between her mother's memories and her creative recreation of those memories. This enables her to transform her mother's memories from the parade in paragraphs 12–15 so that her mother can "see what she cannot yet imagine" (par. 14), showing how memory can bring freedom from trauma.</p> <p>Alvarez re-imagines her mother's memory of the parade: "there is a scene I imagine that she has not told me about" (par. 13). She does so because she wants her mother "to see what she cannot yet imagine: El Jefe coming undone" (par. 14). By doing so, she reduces Trujillo, "the man who had ruled her [mother's] imagination most of her life" to a mere man (par. 15).</p> |
| 12–15 | Trauma | <p>Alvarez gives us a vivid picture in paragraph 12 of her mother's physical and mental suffering during the parade: she describes how "the parade went on for hours in the hot sun," her mother's dress was "damp with sweat" and her feet were "swollen and hurting." She also adds tension by noting that her mother "had" to march and by introducing her mother's fear that she was going to faint.</p> <p>As the passage goes on, Alvarez imagines how she might heal the trauma of this memory. Through the process of re-imagining memory, she enables her mother to "see what she cannot yet imagine" (par. 14) and so liberates her mother from the fear in which she has been living.</p> |