

Literary Analysis Guide

A Complete Student Workbook for Deep Literary Engagement Through the Migration Lens

This comprehensive student-facing guide transforms the reading experience into a systematic journey of literary analysis, personal connection, and critical thinking.

Designed to be used daily throughout the reading of any migration-themed text, this workbook builds from initial impressions to sophisticated final writing projects while centering themes of migration, belonging, identity, and community.

What This Guide Offers

The Literary Analysis Guide serves as both a daily study tool and a resource for final projects. Students work through structured sections before, during, and after reading, accumulating textual evidence and developing interpretations that culminate in three distinct writing projects.

Three-Phase Structure

Pre-Reading (Literary Environment & Inferencing)

Analyze titles and make predictions

- Research author background and publication context
- Explore how historical and political context shapes perspectives
- Identify potential biases and authorial influences

During Reading (Universal Text Engagement & Learning Arc)

Universal Text Engagement:

- Story Elements: Setting, characterization, plot development, conflict
- Authorial Intent: How trauma functions in text, stereotype analysis
- Topics & Themes: Identifying what the text explores and what the author argues

Learning Arc Analysis:

- Moving Stories: Character migration narratives and personal connection to the text
- Understanding Migration: Life before migration, the journey (including borders/barriers), and adjustment/integration in new lands

- Turning to Action: Connecting the text to broader civic responsibility and global patterns

After Reading (Final Written Projects)

- Creative Writing (300 words): Personal response in any format—poem, letter, story, song, journal
- Literary Analysis Essay (4 paragraphs): How the author uses rhetorical devices for social commentary
- Argumentative Essay (4 paragraphs): Using the text as evidence to argue about societal structure, belonging, or global perspectives

Key Features of the Guide

- **Evidence-Based Analysis:** Every question prompts students to cite specific quotes and page numbers, building habits of textual evidence while creating a comprehensive study resource for final projects.
- **Personal Connection:** The guide consistently asks students to connect literary analysis to their own experiences of movement, belonging, and identity, making abstract concepts tangible and relevant.

Scaffolded Thinking

- Questions move from concrete textual observation to abstract interpretation, with "Universal Questions" focusing on evidence and "Learning Arc Questions" emphasizing inference and analysis.
- Character-Centered Approach
- Deep character analysis tracks how individuals navigate migration, negotiate identity, and build belonging across different communities—developing students' empathy alongside analytical skills.
- How Students Use This Guide
- Format: Three-hole punch and place in a binder used throughout the unit. Add Close Reading Analysis Handouts to the same binder as they're assigned.
- Daily Practice: Complete sections as you read, not all at once. The guide is designed for ongoing engagement throughout the reading experience.
- Final Projects: Use accumulated notes from Pre-Reading and During Reading sections as evidence and inspiration for the three final written projects.

Customizable:

Before assigning to students, teachers:

- Create a "Teacher Version" with ideal answers and scaffolding notes
- Adjust column and row spacing for handwritten or digital work
- Remove sections that don't apply to the specific text

- Create differentiated versions with scaffolds:
Include only essential sections for some students
- Pre-fill sections or provide translations
- Add guided reading questions with page numbers
- Provide vocabulary keys by section

The Goal

This guide helps students analyze literature through the lens of migration while developing skills in close reading, critical thinking, and original writing. By centering belonging and community alongside traditional literary analysis, students leave with both academic growth and deeper socio-emotional understanding of what it means to be human in a world on the move.

Part of the Re-Imagining Migration Literature Curriculum Resource Toolkit. This student-facing workbook ensures every text becomes an opportunity for deep analysis, personal reflection, and civic engagement.

Based on the Re-Imagining Migration Learning Arc. For more information:
www.reimaginingmigration.org/framework

How to Use the Guide: Teachers:

- 1) File > Make a copy> Name: "Text Title"-Teacher Version
- 2) File > Make a copy> Name: "Text Title"-Student Version
 - a) **Remove these instructions from the student version doc**
- 3) Complete this document for the text you are teaching, answering each question
 - a) This tool will be most helpful during daily instruction if you plan for ideal student answers and farther-off student answers with pre-planned questions to support their thinking
- 4) Adjust columns and rows in your teacher's version of the Google Doc as you answer, then make those same adjustments in the student version
 - a) If you plan on having students handwrite their answers, adjust the spacing for each box so there is enough room for student writing
 - b) If you plan to assign it as a Google doc, only column and row adjustments are necessary
 - c) **Remove any sections that do not apply to the text you are teaching**
 - d) **Scaffolds: You may want to create multiple versions for scaffolding needs, ex:**
 - i) Only include sections you deem most necessary to understanding
 - ii) Included guided reading questions with page numbers
 - iii) Provide some prefilled-in sections in students' preferred written language
 - iv) Provide a vocabulary key by section

How to use the guide: Students:

Goal: The goal of this packet is to help you analyze literature through the lens of migration by focusing your reading on key details and important aspects of the text, supporting both your analysis and future writing.

- 1) **Flip / Scroll** to the end of this document and read the “Post-Reading” prompts; understanding what your final written projects are will help give you a sense of what you are working towards as you complete the “Pre” and “During Reading” sections
- 2) Before you begin reading, complete the Pre-Reading section
- 3) Skim the questions in the “As You Read” section
 - a) Ask yourself: What do you need to pay attention to while you read
 - b) The first set of Universal Questions mostly asks for textual evidence, while the Learning Arc questions mostly ask you to make inferences and interpret texts
- 4) As you read the text, complete this document, and support your answers with evidence (quotes and page numbers) from the text/book/story/work.
 - a) Use the “Pre” and “During Reading” sections to help you complete your final written projects.
- 5) Complete the 3 final written projects: Creative Writing, Rhetorical Analysis Essay, and Argumentative Essays.

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Pre-Reading

I. Literary Environment, Political Context, and Inferencing

Titles and Introductory Inferencing

Title of Text/Book/Story/Work
What might the title mean? What does it make you think of?
What is one question this story might address?

Literary Environment Context

Publishing: Factual Context

Who is the author?	
What do you know about their background?	

Consider: Their identity, family, education, life experiences, relationships	
What don't you know about their background? Consider: your own assumptions and biases, what information you will need to research	
Where was it written?	
When was it written? Published?	

Publishing Inferential Context

How might the context surrounding the text's publication influence the perspectives/claims/arguments about belonging, community, migration, and/or migrants presented in the text? Consider: - When and where was the text written/published: - How might have geography and geopolitical/historical relationships /context shaped this text? - The author's background: - What was their relationship to the historical/political context surrounding them during the time they wrote this work?
What implicit or explicit bias might exist in this text based on the context you've identified?

During Reading

Historical and Societal Context

Text Perspectives

What examples of migration exist within the text?	How do you know? Cite quotes/page numbers.
What general perspectives on migration are presented in the text? What characters hold these perspectives?	

Publishing and Modern Political Environment in Context

What were some opposing perspectives on migration during the time this work was written/published?	What is the relationship between those perspectives and the ones in the text?
What are present-day perspectives on migration?	How do they relate to the perspectives in the work?

II. Universal Text Engagement

Story Elements

Setting

What is/are the setting(s) of the text?	
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What words does the author use to describe the setting? If there are multiple settings, note down the words used for each	
Are some settings more welcoming than others? If so, how do you know?	
How might the author be using the setting to make a social commentary about migration? Compare and contrast the author's word choice for each setting. Consider: Tone, Connotations, Denotations, and Choice of Adjectives	

Characterization

For each main character:

- 1) Unpack how they are characterized
 - a) Consider: appearance, speech, thoughts/feelings, relationship with/impact on other characters
 - b) Consider: are they characterized as belonging to a community? Does their characterization change depending on the communities they engage with? How do you know?
 - c) Consider: how their characterization shifts throughout the text: does the character change, does what the author reveals about them shift, do their actions make you rethink previous characterizations
 - d) Consider a characters [ecology of identity](#)
- 2) Cite evidence from the text to support your answers, and try to choose evidence that spans the whole text

Main Character's Name	How are they characterized?

Plot Development

How do the societal, political, and environmental forces that characters encounter shape the plot? • Do these forces seem to move the plot along, deepen the plot, or sidetrack from the main plot? • What do you think the authors' intentions of including these forces were? ◦ Why do you think that?

Conflict

- Identify one conflict in the work; how does this conflict nuance the readers' understanding of migration, movement, or adjustment?
- Is the conflict between the character and themselves, the protagonist and another character, or the protagonist and their society?

Inferencing Authorial Intent

Trauma in Text

Does trauma (hardship, conflict, painful events) seem to deepen a reader's empathy or does it seem to be used as a plot tool for shock factor and reader engagement?
Why do you think so?

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Stereotypes in Text

Does this text reinforce any stereotypes? If so, what do you think is the intent of the stereotype? What is the impact?

Topics and Themes

What topics are explored in the text?

Topic	What questions do these topics raise? <i>Consider:</i> what do they illuminate about belonging, community, or migration?

What themes of migration does this text explore?

Theme = topic + author's message about that topic
Potential topics and questions to help students explore connections to an author's message, you can leave in the whole examples, just the topic names, or nothing at all
Human Nature and Migration - Common human experiences and emotions associated with migration. You might use the question "What do these journeys reveal about human nature?" to discuss themes related to human resilience and adaptability. Adjustment and Integration - How do the characters adjust to the changes that come with migration? Consider both the newcomers and those in the larger community. Reflect on the universal and unique qualities of successful integration. What does this text reveal about the way individuals and groups learn to live together? How do the characters in the book learn from and with each other? Integration is a two-way street in which newcomers and members of their new community become more similar over time. Consider ways in which that may or may not happen. Home and Community - How does the character engage with their sense of home and community building? What makes something home? What makes someone part of a community? How does the character navigate losing and rebuilding either? What might the author be revealing about the meaning of home and community? Belonging and Identity- How do characters negotiate their identity in relationship to their surrounding community? To what extent is identity a reflection of the self vs a response to external categorization and/or projection?

III. Learning Arc

I. Moving Stories: Personal Narratives and Character Journeys

Main Characters' Migration Stories

Directions: Identify passages and page numbers that support your understanding of the main characters' experiences; note the page number next to each new insight.

Main Character Name	Where are they from?	Where is their family from?	Where do they live throughout the story?

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Your Migration Story

How does your story of home relate to the characters above? You can discuss similarities and differences with multiple characters or do a deep dive with one character.

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II. Understanding Migration:

A. Life Before Migration:

What was the character's life before their journey, including cultural practices and worldviews? How do you know? Cite evidence (quote), page number, and literary device.

- 1) Identify passages and quotes that illustrate:
 - a) What life was like before migration
 - b) How the character feels about life before migration
 - c) What the writer is saying about life before each character's migration.

Character	What was the character's life before their journey, including cultural practices and worldviews?

B. The Journey

B.1 The Journey

Choose 1-3 character(s) and unpack their migration journey. For each question, support your answer with quotes and page numbers.

Consider the choices they made and the control they had:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1) Why are they leaving places? | 4) What are they leaving behind? |
| 2) What factors are most influencing their choices or / lack of choice? | 5) What are they looking forward to/excited about? |
| 3) What are they taking with them? | 6) What are they scared/afraid of? |

Character's Name:	
What choices did they have to make?	
What control did they have over their migration?	
How are they treated by those they encounter along the way?	

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B. 2 Borders and Barriers

Consider:

- *Physical Borders/Barriers: mountains, rivers, oceans, walls, fences, stations, national/state/county/neighborhood lines*
- *Metaphorical Borders/Barriers: Language, culture, identity, social circles/class*

Character Names:	
What borders and barriers did they cross?	
How do physical and metaphorical borders impact this character's life?	
What impact do the borders/barriers have on their character development?	

Author's Message

What is the author's message on borders and /or barriers? How do you know? Cite evidence and unpack tone / denotations / connotations surrounding the quote.

C. Adjustment and Integration

C1. Conditions In The New Land

Choose 1-3 character(s) and unpack their adjustment and integration journey. For each question, support your answer with quotes and their page numbers.

- o Leave room to note if this changes throughout the text.

Character Name:	
How does their new community greet this character?	
Are they celebrated? If so, what for??	
Are they expected to assimilate into the dominant culture of their new environment? If so, how do you know?	
How does their new environment engage with this character's culture?	
Are there moments when we see this character being excluded from their new environment/ community? If so, by whom? When? Why?	
How does migration affect the characters emotionally and psychologically?	

C.2 Balancing identities

Choose 1-3 character(s) and unpack how they balance their identity. For each question, support your answer with quotes and their page numbers.

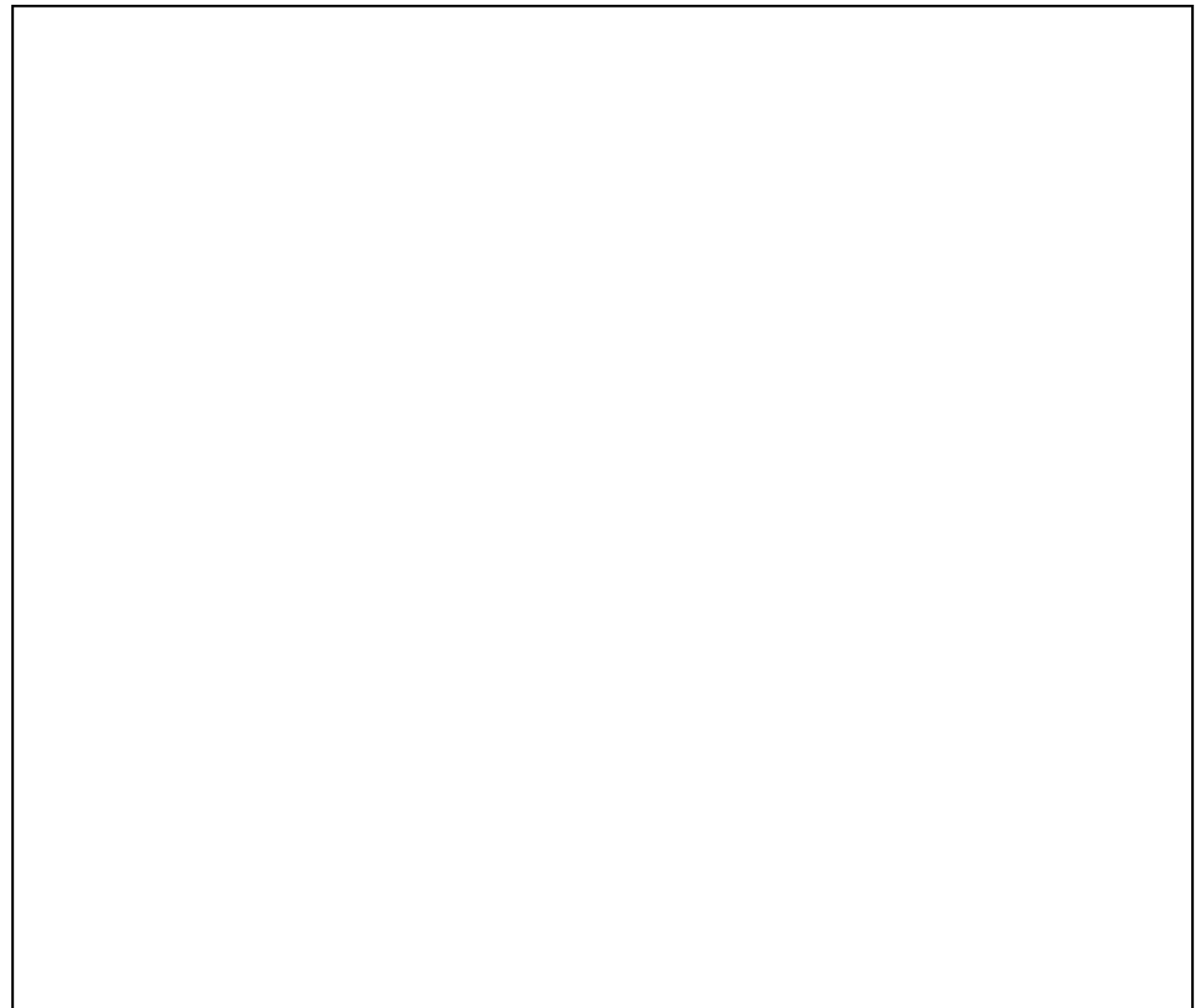
Character Name:	
How does their characterization shift throughout their journey?	
How does their characterization shift once they have arrived/put down roots in a new community?	
How would you characterize their new community? (Identify 1 to 2 significant characters in their new community)	
How does the receiving community's characterization shift or change after having met this newcomer character?	
Consider how the characters negotiate their identities, cultures, and expectations in relation to each other.	

III. Turning to Action: Reflection and Engagement

In **one to two** paragraphs, relate the book's events to broader global patterns and civic migration issues, drawing parallels and contrasts to other texts (books, essays, news sources, etc.).

- What is unique about this text? What is universal or shared with other examples of migration?
- Is it representative of a broader trend, or is it an exception to more common patterns and stories of migration?
- Topics to Consider
 - Civic responsibility and engagement
 - Characters' actions or inactions towards creating inclusive communities
 - Connecting local experiences to global patterns
 - Migration, movement, borders, and barriers

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After Reading

IV. Final Written Projects

Moving Stories

Creative Writing: In a 300-word reflection, capture your creative response to this text..

- Explore your own perspective on the topics this text presented in any format that moves you, a few example formats and potential topics are below
 - **Format/Style:**

- Short Story, Poem, Letter, Email, Song, Journal Entry
- **Potential Topics:** migration, belonging, community, negotiating identity, what it means to be a human in a world on the move

Understanding Migration

Literary Analysis Essay: In a 4-paragraph essay, answer the following prompt using evidence from the text.

- How does the author use rhetorical devices to make a social commentary about migration and/or belonging?

Taking Action

Argumentative Essay: In a 4-paragraph essay, answer the following prompt using evidence from the text.

- Using this work as evidence, write an argumentative essay answering how/what:
 - Society should be structured to embrace a changing world
 - The role of belonging in thriving communities
 - The most important perspectives for a world on the move

This toolkit is based on the Re-Imagining Migration Learning Arc which is part of the Re-Imagining Migration Framework. For more information, go to www.reimaginingmigration.org/framework