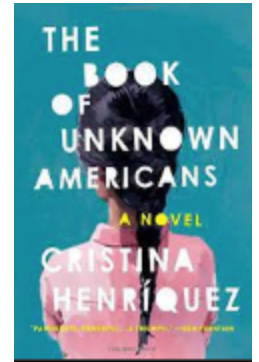


The Book of Unknown Americans

By: Cristina Henríquez



Positive Learning Intention

- What it means to be an American
- Overcoming challenges
- Importance of Community
- Triumphs of someone with a learning disability

Cautionary Material

- Challenges/Racism against immigrant families
- Cultural Marginalization
- Threats/Bullying

Excerpts to contextualize cautionary material:

- **Racism against immigrant families:** Arturo and Maribel experience a classmate treating them differently and telling them to "...go back to Mexico..." (not where they are from) and ignoring their requests for assistance.
- **Cultural Marginalization:** Maribel, who has suffered a traumatic brain injury, faces difficulties in communication and social integration. Her parents, Alma and Arturo, struggle to navigate a society that often views them as outsiders due to their immigrant status and cultural differences.
- **Threats/Bullying:** Garret corners Mayor by the lockers and picks a fight with him by calling Maribel names and making unacceptable suggestions.

Excerpts that reflect learning intentions:

- **"I wanted to believe, truly believe, that we could have a better life here, in this country. But what did that mean? A better life?"** This excerpt reflects the uncertainty many immigrants face when they arrive in the U.S., trying to reconcile their dreams with the reality of what it means to build a life in a new country. It echoes the complexities of defining "American" for someone who's not yet sure of their place.
- **"I could have been any other teenager who gave up. But I wasn't. I stayed."** This line is about overcoming personal struggles, including adapting to life in a new country and enduring the difficulties of fitting in. It highlights the character's resilience and decision not to give up, embodying the strength to face challenges head-on.
- **"We are not alone here. Not completely. The people in this building are like us. We help each other."** This quote reflects the solidarity within a community of immigrants, highlighting how community members rely on each other for support. It emphasizes the importance of having a group of people who understand your struggles and can provide emotional and practical assistance.

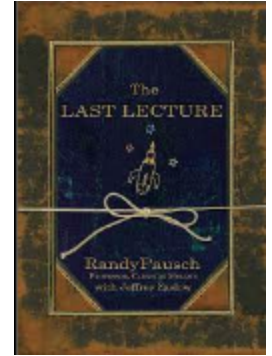
Projects/Assignments that reflect learning intentions:

- **Personal Identity Essay and Reflection:** Students will analyze and argue their personal understanding of what it means to be American, using personal experiences and evidence from external sources (like historical examples of overcoming challenges).
 - W.11-12.1: *Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics*

- or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.*
 - RI.11-12.1: *Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.*
 - W.11-12.2: *Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately.*
- **Documentary or Interview Project:** Students conduct research (either through interviews or secondary sources) to understand the challenges individuals with learning disabilities face and the role of community support in overcoming those challenges.
 - W.11-12.7: *Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question or solve a problem; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the topic under investigation.*
 - SL.11-12.6: *Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when appropriate.*
 - W.11-12.2: *Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately.*
- **Creative Writing: Short Story or Poem**—Students write creative narratives (short stories or poems) about characters overcoming challenges, particularly related to learning disabilities, and ultimately triumphing with the support of the community.
 - **W.11-12.3:** *Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events.*
 - **RL.11-12.3:** *Analyze how complex characters develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or theme.*
 - **W.11-12.1:** *Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.*

The Last Lecture

By: Randy Paus



Positive Learning Intention

- Emphasizes life lessons on resilience, determination, and achieving one's dreams.
- Encourages personal growth and reflection on how to live with purpose.
- Teaches the importance of perseverance, gratitude, and maintaining a positive attitude in the face of adversity.
- Reinforces values such as humility, integrity, and hard work.

Positive Community Impact

- Inspires readers to approach life with optimism and a problem-solving mindset.
- Encourages individuals to support and uplift others.
- Promotes the idea of leaving a meaningful legacy.
- Advocates for mentorship, collaboration, and lifelong learning.

Cautionary Material

- None; the book is inspirational and family-friendly.

Excerpts to Contextualize Learning Intentions

- The following passage emphasizes persistence and overcoming obstacles: "The brick walls are there for a reason. The brick walls are not there to keep us out. The brick walls are there to give us a chance to show how badly we want something."
- The following passage encourages resilience and a positive outlook on challenges: "We cannot change the cards we are dealt, just how we play the hand."
- The following passage highlights the importance of empathy and community: "Find the best in everybody."

Projects/Assignments that Reflect Learning Intentions

- **Personal Reflection Essay:** Students write about a personal "brick wall" they have encountered and how they overcame or plan to overcome it.
 - W.11-12.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
 - W.11-12.10: Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.
- **Letter to My Future Self:** Students write a letter to themselves five or ten years in the future, outlining their aspirations and strategies for personal growth.
 - W.11-12.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- **Gratitude Journal Assignment:** Students keep a daily journal reflecting on positive aspects of their lives and acts of kindness they have witnessed or performed.
 - W.11-12.10: Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research,

reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

- W.11-12.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.