

Student Work: Feature Articles on “My Personal Migration Story”

These feature articles were written by 7th grade students in Donna Torres’ class at the Urban Institute Of Mathematics in the Bronx, NY during spring 2021. Each feature article in this packet is followed by a rubric with comments from the teacher.

7th Grade Requirements for Feature Article Assignment:

Write a feature article on a topic about your family experience with migration/immigration. Feature articles examine a particular aspect of a topic in depth. Feature articles always inform but may also entertain and sometimes persuade. They use a variety of text features and multimedia components. One key to writing a successful feature article is to research information about the topic using credible and accurate sources. All feature articles should include...

- Clear topic and central idea
- Introduction that engages the reader and previews what is to follow
- Interview quotes and summarized information
- Text organized into sections with headings
- Three (3) credible research sources
- Transitions that create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts
- Conclusion that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented
- Formal style, precise language, and domain-specific vocabulary
- Graphics/images (charts, tables, maps, illustrations, photos, graphs, and other visual representations of information), and captions to explain them
- Hyperlinks

My Personal Migration Story by Kylie

People all over the world come from different places and come to America for many different reasons. A better life , better jobs, they are running away from something or they need a fresh start. Everyone has a different story, and that is what makes them unique. This is my family's migration story. I am Irish and Italian. My dad is Irish and my mom is Italian. My mom's family came to America from Italy in the 1930's. My great great grandmother and her husband and 5 kids all came here together on a boat. They came here to America for better opportunities. For example to make more money and for better jobs. After a couple of years personal tragedies happened to them and my great great grandma got sick of America and went back to Italy. The first tragedy that happened is that my great great grandpa fell off a ladder while he was painting and died. The second tragedy that happened to my family is that the youngest brother died from a hot boiling pot of water that fell when my great great grandma was cooking pasta.

Look below for picture of Italy



My dad's mom and dad came to America from Ireland over 50 years ago on a boat. They came here for a better life for more opportunities. They didn't leave America. They liked America better than Ireland.

Look below for a picture of ireland.



I really enjoyed learning about my culture and my ancestors. If you liked this story then you should ask your mom or dad to tell you a little bit of where you are from. If you don't like where you are from or you feel embarrassed about it remember, you should never be embarrassed by who you are. Thank you for reading my migration story. I hope you find yours.

Rubric: Feature Article/ Informational Text

Category	Description	Score
Overall	The writer brought together ideas and information about a subject in a text that develops a subtopic and/or an idea. They incorporated a variety of text structures as needed, including argument, explanation, narrative, and procedural passages.	4/4
Lede	The writer interested the reader in the topic by explaining its significance or providing a compelling fact, statistic, or anecdote. They made it clear what parts of this topic the text would tackle, and how the ideas and information in the text would unfold.	4/4
Transitions	The writer used transitions to lead readers across parts of the text and to help them note how parts of the text relate back to earlier parts. Uses phrases like, just as, returning to, as we saw earlier, similarly to, unlike, and yet.	4/4
Ending	In the conclusion, the writer reinforced and built on the main point(s) in a way that made the entire piece a cohesive whole. The conclusion may have restated the main points, responded to them, or highlighted their significance.	4/4
Organization	The writer focused their writing on a subtopic or a	4/4

	<p>particular point or two. The writer organized the piece into parts and used structures (claims and supports, problem/solution, sequence, etc.) to organize those parts (and perhaps the whole). The writer used introductions, topic sentences, transitions, formatting, and graphics, where appropriate, to clarify the structure of the piece and to highlight main points.</p>	
Elaboration	<p>The writer included varied kinds of information such as interviews, facts, quotations, examples, and definitions. They analyzed or explained the information, showing how the information fits with the key points or subtopics, including graphics where appropriate. The writer consistently incorporated and cited sources. The writer worked to make the topic compelling as well as understandable. The writer brought out why it mattered and why the audience should care about it.</p>	4/4
Craft	<p>The writer used words purposefully to affect meaning and tone. The writer selected precise words and used quotes, metaphors, anecdotes, images, or comparisons to explain what they meant. The writer included domain-specific, academic vocabulary, and defined these when appropriate. The writer used a formal tone, but varied it</p>	4/4

	appropriately to engage the reader.	
Spelling, Grammar, Punctuation	The writer spelled technical vocabulary and academic vocabulary accurately. The writer used different sentence structures to achieve different purposes throughout the argument. The writer used internal punctuation effectively.	2/2
Total		30/30

30/30 = 100% plus 5 points extra credit = 105%

Kylie, What a wonderful job on your story! Excellent detail and thoughtful questions produced a meaningful story. I am so happy you enjoyed exploring your heritage. 105%

My Father's Journey by Gharam



When my dad was first born in the country of Yemen, he was not in the city. He lived in a village where he had to work on feeding animals and other's (Village jobs). He used to skip school due to the hard conditions in his life. He used to go to school about 2 days a week and sometimes only one time.



When he reached the age of 17 his father (My grandpa) was thinking of taking him to America to build his future/ career. After a month of thinking about my father going to the USA. My Grandpa finally made a decision to take my father to America. Of course my dad loved the idea and after a week they traveled to America. They lived in Seattle, Washington for about two months. My grandpa showed my dad the city and everything. And then my grandpa went back to Yemen (leaving my dad, Fahd). Of course my father was not sure what to do because he didn't know the first step. He met friends and they showed him many jobs. My dad at first worked as a cashier in a store for about three months and left. My dad moved to NEW YORK CITY. He then bought a store after collecting enough money to help him with his journey. Then after a year he went back to

Yemen and married my mom. He went back to America after staying in Yemen for about 3 years. After going back and forth from Yemen to America. He finally decided to make us visit America, of course after I was born and three other siblings. He took us to America when war began in Yemen (WORST TIMES). We are now in America waiting for the next step. Either going back to Yemen or permanently living in America.

I found out so much about my family after these interviews. I am happy and thankful to be a part of them and learn more about their history.



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Transitions	The writer used transitions to lead readers across parts of the text and to help them note how parts of the text relate back to earlier parts. Uses phrases like, just as, returning to, as we saw earlier, similarly to, unlike, and yet.	4/4
Ending	In the conclusion, the writer reinforced and built on the main point(s) in a way that made the entire piece a cohesive whole. The conclusion may have restated the main points, responded to them, or highlighted their significance.	4/4

<p>Organization</p>	<p>The writer focused their writing on a subtopic or a particular point or two. The writer organized the piece into parts and used structures (claims and supports, problem/solution, sequence, etc.) to organize those parts (and perhaps the whole). The writer used introductions, topic sentences, transitions, formatting, and graphics, where appropriate, to clarify the structure of the piece and to highlight main points.</p>	<p>4/4</p>
<p>Elaboration</p>	<p>The writer included varied kinds of information such as interviews, facts, quotations, examples, and definitions. They analyzed or explained the information, showing how the information fits with the key points or subtopics, including graphics where appropriate. The writer consistently incorporated and cited sources. The writer worked to make the topic compelling as well as understandable. The writer brought out why it mattered and why the audience should care about it.</p>	<p>4/4</p>
<p>Craft</p>	<p>The writer used words purposefully to affect meaning and tone. The writer selected precise words and used quotes, metaphors, anecdotes, images, or comparisons to explain what they meant. The writer included domain-specific, academic vocabulary, and defined these when</p>	<p>4/4</p>

	appropriate. The writer used a formal tone, but varied it appropriately to engage the reader.	
Spelling, Grammar, Punctuation	The writer spelled technical vocabulary and academic vocabulary accurately. The writer used different sentence structures to achieve different purposes throughout the argument. The writer used internal punctuation effectively.	2/2
Total		30/30

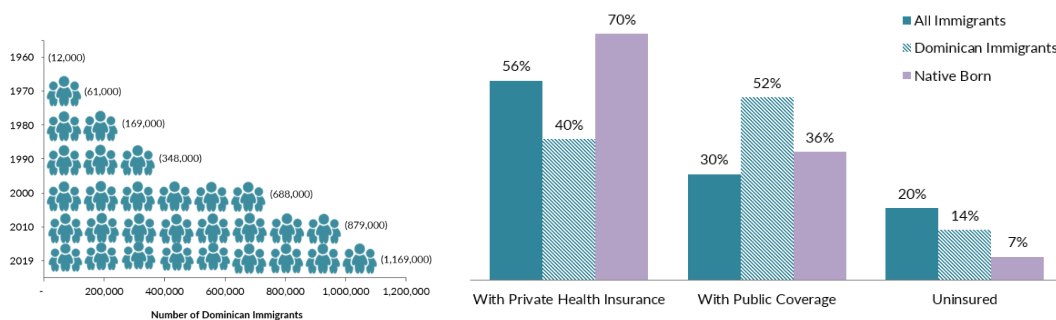
30/30+ 100% plus 5 points Extra Credit = 105%

Gharam, You did an outstanding job on this entire project. Your article is well written and thoughtful. You exceeded all requirements including interesting graphics and a map that helps the reader to get a geographic sense of the journey. Great work!! 105%

Starting a New Life by Miley

Coming here was a little scary, but exciting at the same time,” commented Juan Carlos, an fifty-nine year old immigrant from the Dominican Republic (Carlos Interview). During an interview about his immigrant experience, Carlos shared many experiences and thoughts on his journey to the United States. Carlos migrated from the Dominican Republic when he was just sixteen years old. He came by himself, and settled with his aunt in New York. Migrating was scary for Carlos because he had never been on a long trip like this before, never mind to a new country and home. Carlos says, “The most I had been was on a bus or a car, but actually having to be on a plane for the first time, by myself, was a lot of things – a lot of emotions. But I would say I was definitely looking forward to it” (Carlos interview). This feeling is similar to that of most immigrants, who also come to the United States looking for better opportunities.

In a country full of hope and endless possibility, immigrants are able to seek out higher education and well-paying jobs. At home in the Dominican Republic, Carlos went to school and he decided to continue his education upon arriving in America. After settling in with his Aunt in New York City, Carlos enrolled in high school. He then earned his GED at Kingsborough Community College, and after that he continued on to City Tech, where he did not complete his schooling but earned his associates degree. Education was very important to Carlos because it was the start to making his journey all worth the while. Although he was personally motivated, not all Dominican immigrants feel the same way. In total Dominicans represent about 576,701 of the New York City population. In a study of socioeconomic inequality among young adults ages 18 to 34, it was found that among first generation Dominican immigrants, the number of college graduates was only 12 percent. This number increased among the second generation which has 27 percent who graduated college. Although this number increased, dropout rates remain very high, (about 1 in 4 students) (Rumbaut 54). Education is lacking and is one of the lead contributing factors as to why Dominicans still obtain such low-wage jobs.



Luckily Carlos was motivated enough to go to school and managed to find decent paying jobs without trouble. He spoke English, which opens a whole new land of opportunities as far as jobs come. Carlos said, “If I did not speak the little bit of English that I knew then, it definitely would have been a lot harder” (Carlos Interview). He first took up a job in the flooring business, and then worked in construction. These jobs allowed for Carlos to work and earn decent pay, but

he eventually came into the position he now holds as the manager of a grocery store in Brooklyn, New York. All of the hard work he has put in so far has contributed to Carlos' success as a citizen of the United States, which is an achievement Carlos is very proud of.

Another aspect of life that Carlos is proud of is his culture and the way he remains tied to it even though he is in a different country. He places high value on maintaining traditions through elements such as food and religion. He says, "The food is first and foremost. There is the staple of rice and plátanos" (Carlos Interview). He also tries his best to follow his Catholic religion, and says that if the time comes when he has children, he will teach them the culture and traditions through the language, food and religion. Transnational ties are also maintained through political involvement. On his first trip to New York City as President of the Dominican Republic, Leonel Fernandez Reyna actually urged Dominicans to pursue dual citizenship (Foner 181). Dual citizenship is encouraged because it encourages citizens to not only embrace America as their new country, but to remember and stay connected to the Dominican Republic.



The question of what it means to be Dominican and what it means to be American is open to interpretation. Depending on their varying aspirations, experiences, and ties to their country of origin, immigrants' answers to this question will differ. In Carlos' opinion, being Dominican means being very loud and prideful. The combination of aspects such as these create such strong identities for immigrants, and the best way for immigrants to feel comfortable in a new place is to incorporate values from both the new and old worlds in order to maintain their culture as well as relate to and experience a new one.

The struggle of immigration remains difficult to understand still to this day. It is hard for people to understand what the migration experience is like if they have not personally been through it. For some the task is made easier with the help of family, education, job opportunity, and ties to home. Carlos is an example of one Dominican who got it right, and was able to make a stable life for himself in the United States. His life in New York is much more fulfilling than the party life available at home. He has remained strong and dedicated to his future, and is lucky because many immigrants have not ended up in the same fortunate situation. Despite the trouble and hard work involved in migrating, people continue to do so because of hope.

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Spelling, Grammar, Punctuation	The writer spelled technical vocabulary and academic vocabulary accurately. The writer used different sentence structures to achieve different purposes throughout the argument. The writer used internal punctuation effectively.	2/2
Total		30/30

30/30 = 100% plus 5 points Extra Credit = 105%

Miley, This is the BEST!! Beautifully written and researched. You made maximum use of the information from your interview as well as from independent sources. Sophisticated and informative. 105%

Dominican Republic to NYC by Alicia

Have you ever been to or were born in a different country and moved to another? Well, my mother sure did. On February 28th, 1978, my mom was born in the Dominican Republic in a place called La Romana. She lived with her parents and siblings.



My Mother's Perspective

"It felt free in DR." My mother says. She had felt a sense of freedom while living there and was so happy to be there. The weather was always nice, so she was able to be with family and play with her cousins. "All of our family lived close to each other and we were able to just go see each other and play." Also, she enjoyed the food she had there. She mostly had home cooked meals, but also had pizza every once and a while. It was something special whenever they had pizza. Of course, when she heard that her family had to leave DR, she was upset. But very excited, too. She'd miss her experiences in DR, but her siblings had different points of views.



Sister's Perspective

“I was happy living there... The weather was always hot so my family went to the beach.” My mom’s sister, Lucy, was very happy living in DR, and had a great time outside. But, instead of being excited to leave, she was upset. “I was very sad because I didn’t want to leave my family, my school and friends.” She had many friends in DR, and didn’t want to leave them so soon. Yes she was excited, but she was more sad than anything. She had to leave family and her home behind.



Grandmother's Perspective

"I loved living in DR, although I didn't have a lot of things, it was enough for me." My grandma was grateful for what she had in DR, she loved everything about living there and had a great time. She loved being with family, eating everything that she made, and so much more. And it was all enough for her. She couldn't ask for anymore. When she had left to go to NYC, she was very excited to see new cultures and new places, but she was also sad to leave family, like her children were.



Conclusion

Leaving Dominican Republic was a big step for my mother's family, and was exciting, yet nerve-wrecking. Dominican Republic was such a beautiful place to my family, but my family is grateful for living here because we all are able to see each other too. Today, me and my family live in the Bronx and are happily living together.

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Spelling, Grammar, Punctuation	The writer spelled technical vocabulary and academic vocabulary accurately. The writer used different sentence structures to achieve different purposes throughout the argument. The writer used internal punctuation effectively.	2/2
Total		30/30

30/30 = 100% plus 5 points Extra Credit = 105%

Alicia, Excellent job on this! I loved how you looked at everyone's individual perspective on migrating. It pulls your story together in a cohesive unit. It's interesting how the family members felt a bit differently about leaving DR but the common thread is that everyone had mixed emotions. Sad to leave their home but looking forward to the future. It kind of sums up the universal migration story. Outstanding work! 105%