



The Immigrant Experience: Survival, Hope, and the American Dream



By Alma Hernandez

Rationale:



- Increasing xenophobia and hatred toward immigrants create incorrect perceptions and narratives about them.
- School curriculums do not address immigration, even when the topic arises it is briefly discussed in social studies, history, or English classes.
- This unit aims to develop critical thinking, compassion, and empathy for undocumented people.

Centerpiece: The *Undocumented Americans* by Karla Cornejo Villavicencio

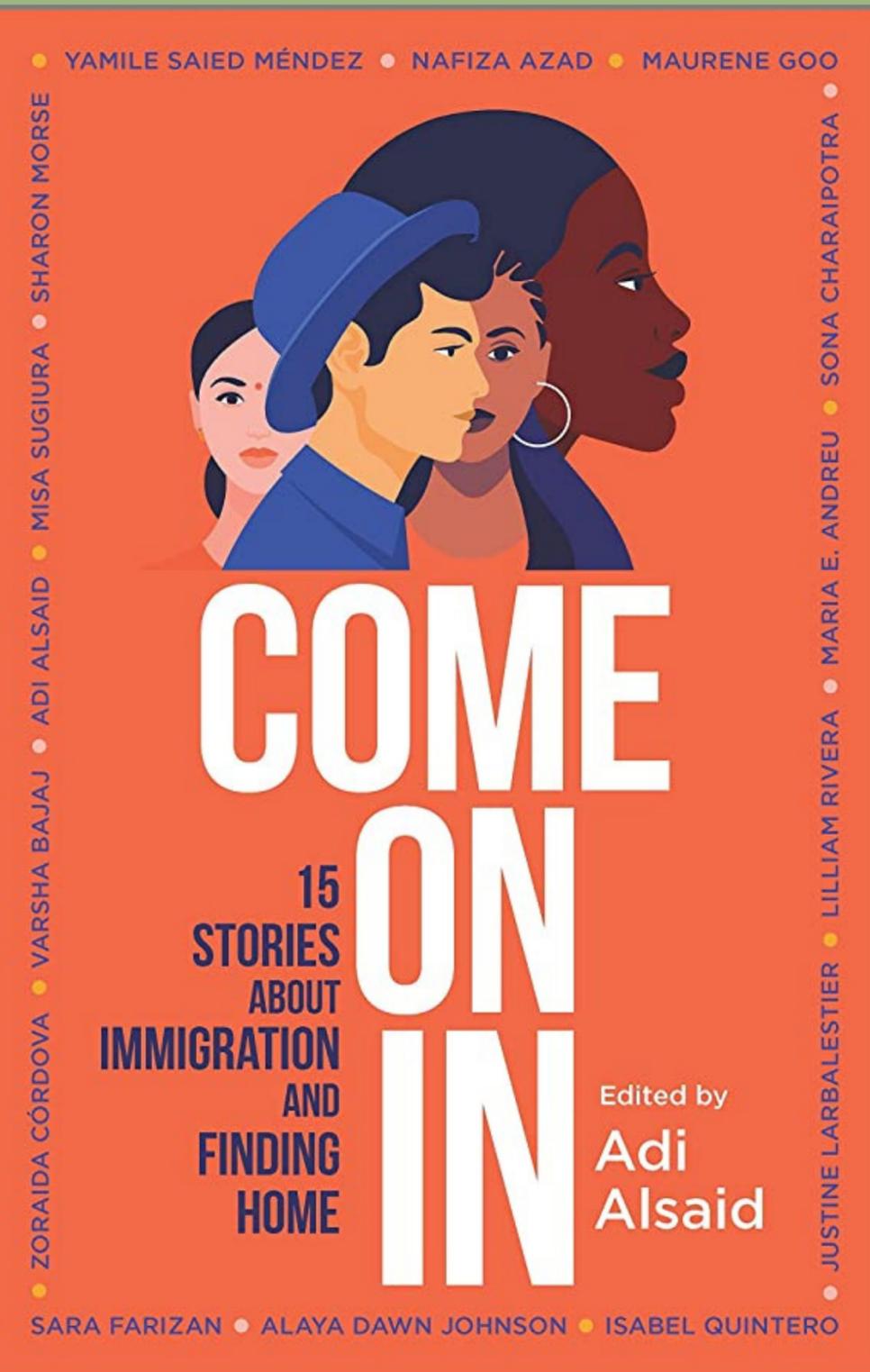
The Undocumented Americans



Karla Cornejo Villavicencio

- Cornejo writes after the presidential election of 2016 when immigrants experienced a range of emotions and became afraid of being deported after Trump's election.

Companion Text: *Come On In* by Adi Alsaid



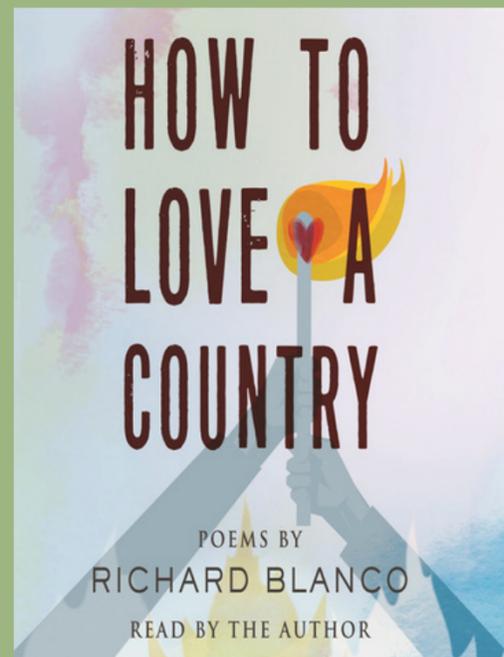
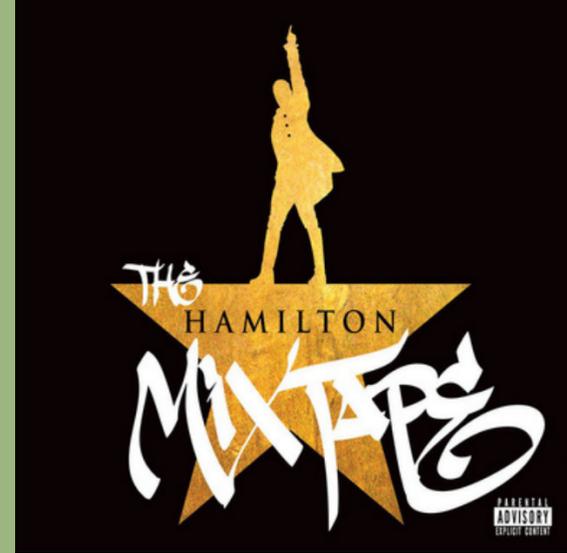
- This anthology offers fifteen stories by YA authors who are undocumented and children of undocumented people. It represents actual people instead of reinforcing stereotypes.

Introducing the Unit:

- What is the difference between immigration, emigration, and migration? What do you know about immigration? And if you feel comfortable, do you know anyone in your family or community that is an immigrant? OR do you know of any celebrities, authors, or historical figures that are immigrants?

OR

- What does it mean to belong somewhere? Have you ever experienced a big change in your life? Such as moving into a new neighborhood, city, school, or country? Did you feel as if you would ever fit in?



Working Through the Text:

- At the beginning of each class, they will be given a journal prompt that goes along with the chapter being read that day.
- We would also discuss Cornejo's struggle as a Dreamer and carrying the weight of being the “model” minority, sibling, and daughter.
- *Come On In* would help students understand that “immigrant” is not synonymous with Latinx or Mexican and introduce them to characters from different cultures.

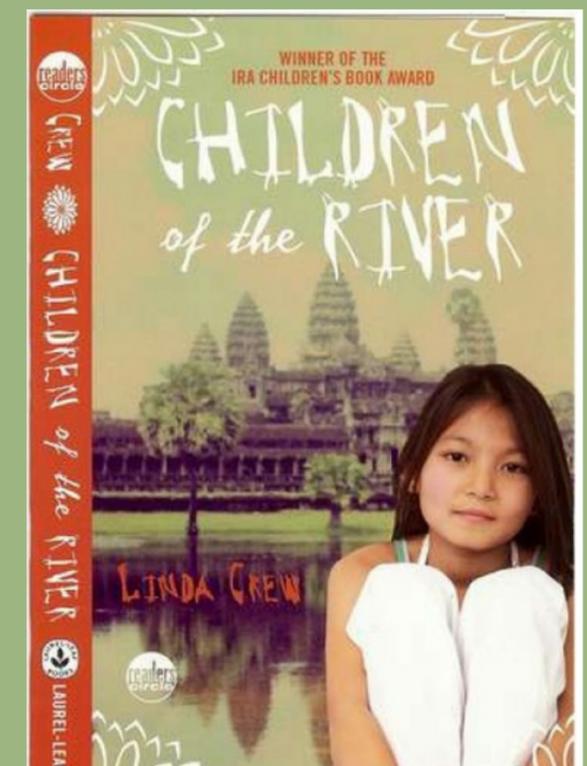
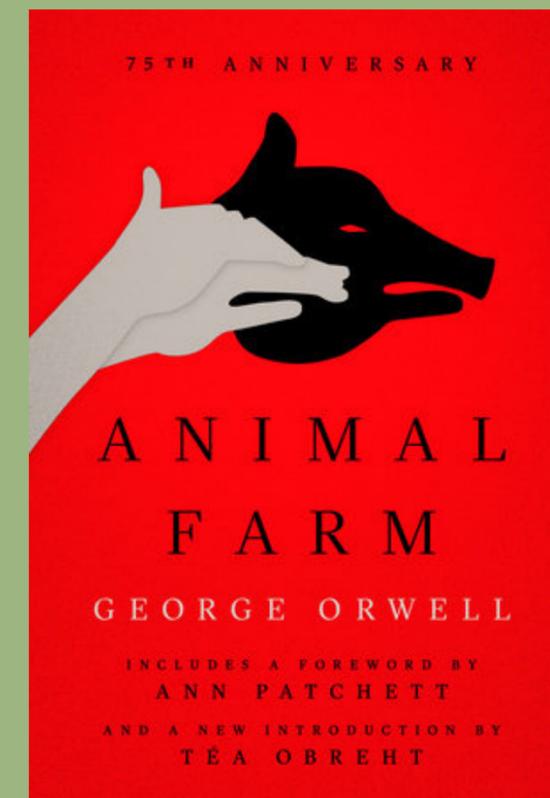
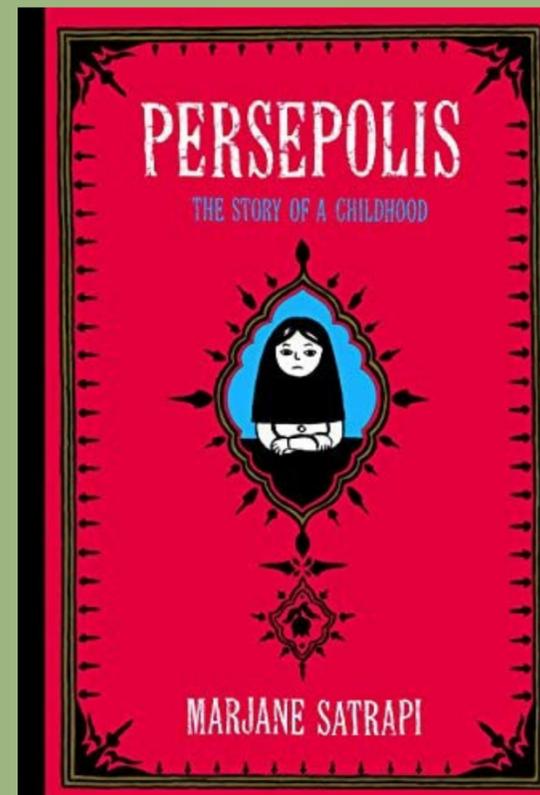
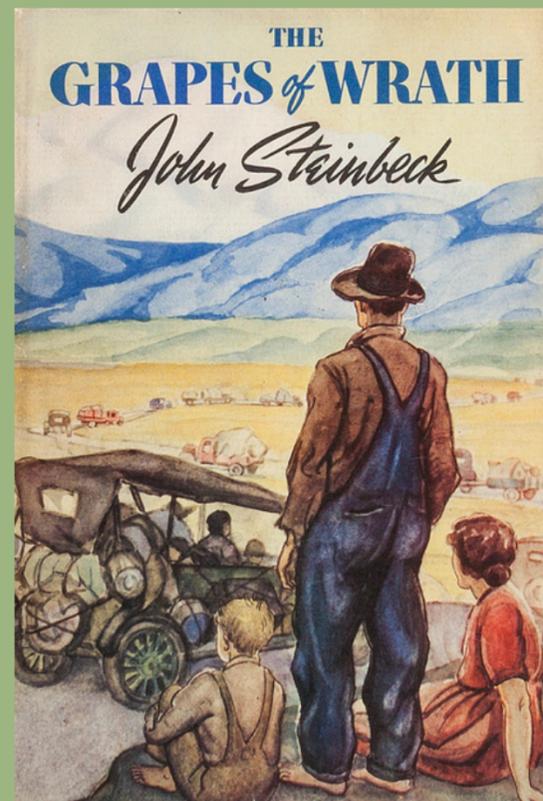
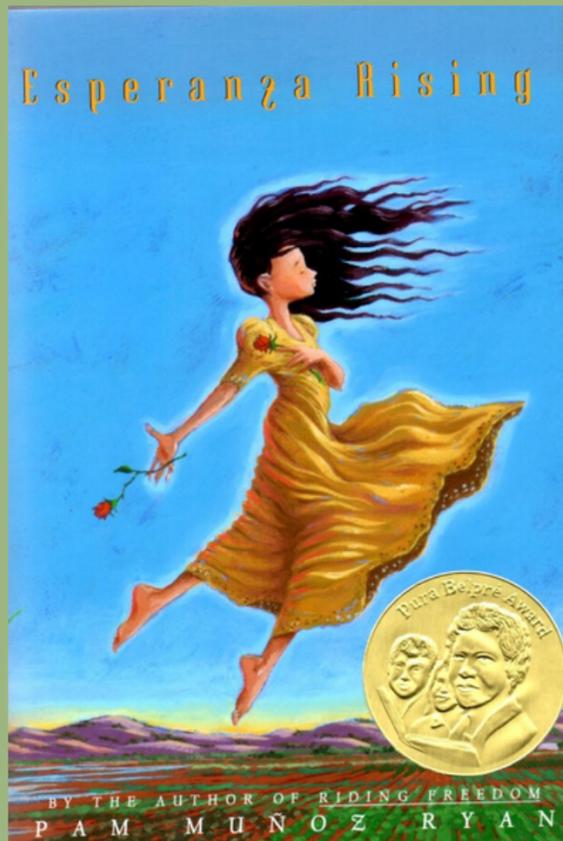
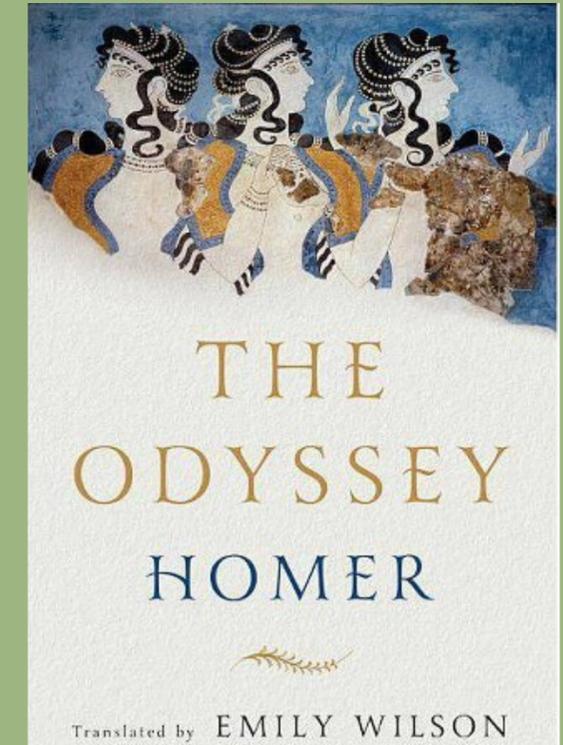
<p>Title of Chapter:</p>	<p>Were you aware of any crises/natural disasters Cornejo writes about? Circle one.</p>	<p>Major Quotes: Write down any quotes you find significant. Include pg #</p>	<p>Identify some themes the chapters represent: assimilation, reasons to emigrate, economic issues, mental health, support systems, language barriers, education, etc.</p>
	<p>Yes No</p>		

Going Beyond the Text:

- *Americanized: Rebel Without a Green Card* by Sara Saedi:
- *Indivisible* by Daniel Aleman
- *We Are Here to Stay: Voice of Undocumented Young Adults* by Susan Kuklin
- *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood* by Marjane Satrapi
- *The Sun is Also a Star* by Nicola Yoon

Going Beyond the Text: YA Pairs

1. Esperanza Rising/The Grapes of Wrath
2. Persepolis/Animal Farm
3. *Children of the River*/ *The Odyssey*



Ending the Unit:

- Students will have the choice to write an essay or work on a "presentation."
- Write an essay in which you focus on an undocumented community that is struggling because of a lack of healthcare benefits. You may choose to talk about their experience with the healthcare system in America. Additionally, you can write about the alternatives that immigrants take to obtain medicine and what shops serve them. How do they seek healing?
- Find someone in their community to interview that has migrated. They will create a presentation that leads us through the story interviewee.

Thank
You!