



YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

to strengthen teaching in public schools®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2017 Volume II: Literature, Life-Writing, and Identity

Growing Roots, Stretching Wings: An Exploration of Identity and Voice for English Learners

Guide for Curriculum Unit 17.02.09, published September 2017
by Sara Stillman

Navigating the balance of a past and present life is a large part of adolescence. Taking on adult roles and leaving childhood behind is something many high school immigrants endure well before adolescence. In addition, newcomers have often missed significant portions of school, sometimes placing them grade levels behind their new peers. Educators meeting the academic and social emotional needs of these students face numerous challenges and often find great success through hands on learning experiences. This unit uses the Visual Arts to explore immigrant memoirs while empowering students to write and record their own stories to embed into sculptural art. With reading and visual analysis activities focused on Thi Bui's graphic novel *The Best We Could Do* students will examine the relationships between text and image through narrative storytelling. Using Art-Based Research teachers of 6th through 12th grade in both English and Art can integrate art making and English language concepts to reach a broad range of learners.

(Developed for Visual Arts, grade 10; recommended for Visual Arts, English Language Arts, and English Language Development, grades 7-12)

<https://teachers.yale.edu>

©2023 by the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Yale University, All Rights Reserved. Yale National Initiative®, Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute®, On Common Ground®, and League of Teachers Institutes® are registered trademarks of Yale University.

For terms of use visit https://teachers.yale.edu/terms_of_use