

# Folsom Alley

by **Rebecca Gonzales**

Illustrated by **Graeme Fordyce**

Curriculum developed by **Rosalind Helfand** and **Tiffany Owens**

Supplementary curriculum and copy editing by **Léna Garcia**



## OVERVIEW

### Quick Glance 10 Points for Usage Guide

Student Population	
Age/Grade Level Appropriateness	* Ages 14 and up * Grades 9 and up (Complex themes, but completely PG. Could be used with sophisticated readers even in eighth grade. Standards-Focus optimized for ninth grade.)
Genre/s	Contemporary, narrative nonfiction, memoir
Length	2,021 words
Content Advisories	Gang violence; gun usage; moderate profanity
One Sentence Summary	A mother insists on raising her son in the East L.A. neighborhood where she grew up, despite the threat of violence.

Lesson Planning	
Topic/s	Gang violence Neighborhoods of East L.A. Parental love and protection Innocence innocence lost
Key Theme/s Overview	Concept of home Neighborhood and identity The power of one's roots Denial
Historic Events / Time Period for Study	* History of the neighborhoods of East L.A. – Independent East Los Angeles, City Terrace, Boyle Heights, Brooklyn Heights * Chicano Movement in Los Angeles * History of the 1980s U.S. War on Drugs movement * Street gangs of East Los Angeles

Lesson Planning	
Complementary Classic and Historic Texts	Poem: “The Cave of the Unborn” by Thomas Hardy Article: “Strange Rumbblings in Aztlan” by Hunter S. Thompson Play: <i>Zoot Suit</i> by Luis Valdez. (This play will be performed at the Music Center of Los Angeles in February and March of 2017.)
Author and Artists Information	<b>Rebecca Gonzales</b> is a writer and poet living in East Los Angeles.  <b>Graeme Fordyce</b> is a photographer living in Pasadena.

Key Common Core Standards (found in detail following the curriculum)	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.4, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.9, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.4, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.4.A, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.5, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.7, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.C, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.D, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.3, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.3.A, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.3.D, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.6, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.2
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## Author Biography

Cultivated by the sun and moon peeking past the shoes dangling from the phone lines, **Rebecca Gonzales** was raised and resides “one block East of El Pino” in East L.A. Rebecca’s work has been published in various literary anthologies and journals, such as *Brooklyn & Boyle*, *Hinchas de Poesia*, *The Mas Tequila Review*, *Cipactli*, and others. She was the March 2014 winner of “The Poets of New York” series at the Bowery in New York City. She has three self-published books of poetry and is currently working on a book of short stories, poetry, and prose. As a mother she is humbled, as a poet she is obedient, and as a woman she is unapologetic.

## Artist Biography

**Graeme Fordyce** grew up in the northwest of England, west Texas, and northern California. His background in photography began while studying at the College of Creative Studies in Santa Barbara. Aside from shooting fine-art images of natural landscapes, he worked for years as a photographer and

writer for *Outdoor Photographer Magazine*. Many of Fordyce's prints focus on scenes and details that aren't conventionally glamorous. His images are often studies of the wrinkles and warts in natural and urban landscapes where, the argument goes, the real emotional texture lies. Fordyce has shown private galleries in San Francisco and Los Angeles, as well as solo and shared galleries in Los Angeles and Santa Barbara.

## SYNOPSIS

The mother of a young boy is determined to live in the East Los Angeles neighborhood where she grew-up, despite the ever present threat of gang violence and the disapproval of her partner. This seemingly unwise decision is explored through the mother's memories of her childhood and her neighborhood, both good and bad. Her loyalty to her neighborhood is challenged when she and her son are caught in the midst of gang activities. Readers are left to wonder not just why the mother chooses to remain in East L.A., but also whether she fully understands her own reasons for remaining. This is a nonfiction narrative piece.

## CURRICULUM

### Pre-Reading & Themes Activity Options

#### Topic

What does home mean to you? Is home a place you will always come back to or a place you wish to leave? Discuss the power and meaning of home for you in a 10-minute journaling exercise. (If you prefer not to write about your own personal home, you can write about the concept of home in general.)

#### Main Ideas

Given the danger, violence, and illegal activity that are hallmarks of gang life, why would young people choose to join gangs? What would inspire them to stay away from gangs — to choose not to join gang life?

Write for five minutes on the first question, then stop and write for five minutes on the second question. Partner up with a fellow student and discuss your ideas about each question before coming back together to share them in a classroom discussion.

#### Passage-Specific Themes

Read the following passage from "Folsom Alley":

“He listens to my stories with reluctance and always closes the conversation with, ‘We got to move, Love.’

One day he says to me, ‘Miles is a sweet kid. He won’t survive this hood.’

Part of me agrees, the part that never speaks.

I say, ‘I survived worse.’

He responds, ‘It’s different for boys.’

I chuckle. ‘Guys always say that shit.’”

Should children be sheltered from the harsh realities of the world or taught to survive them? Why or why not? What do the characters’ statements tell us about what they believe?

### Universal Themes

Think back to a time when you were unaware of the harsh realities of the world. Most people go through a period in their lives when they become aware of the world’s troubles — they lose their childhood innocence.

Create an artwork that explores the concept of innocence. It can be a collage, a painting, or a drawing. Once you’ve completed the art, write a short essay discussing what it means to be innocent of the world’s troubles and what it means to lose that innocence. Attach your essay to your artwork.

### Key Vocabulary

Level One	Level Two	Level Three
bologna	bungalow	Gage Maravilla (gang)
percussion instrument	gunslinger	Geraghty Boys (gang)
sketchy	hood	The Lot (gang)
smirk	ensue	Folsom Alley (gang activity location)
betrayed	pamphlet	
droopy	wedges	
	inevitable	
	cholito	

### Vocabulary Activities

1. Slang terms often have an interesting history. Research the definitions of the word “hood.” In the context of “Folsom Alley,” what does “hood” refer to? Continue your research specific to the context of “Folsom Alley,” and write a short essay on how, when, and where “hood” first came to mean “neighborhood.”
2. Review the definition of a pamphlet. Now look for sample images of pamphlets online. Once you feel that you have a good idea of what a pamphlet is, find a sample pamphlet at a local business, store, your school, etc., and bring it to class to share. Ask students to group together in pairs and discuss how they know it’s a pamphlet, where it came from, and what topics it covers.
3. Extended activity option: As a whole class, discuss whether or not you think a pamphlet is the best and/or most efficient way for the Sheriff’s Office to inform citizens that there was a shooting right in front of their houses. Talk about other ways they might inform the community about what happened and what to do.
4. Read the following passage from “Folsom Alley”:
5. “I look out to the main street, Eastern Ave., and see a little cholito walking up the hill. I guess he is about seventeen. I’ve seen him before, handcuffed beside a cop car, the first time there was a shooting outside the school. I smile at him. His cheeks look like they still have baby fat. He smirks at me with a sideways glance and a slight nod. Maybe he recognizes me too.”
6. “Cholito” is a diminutive of “cholo.” Research the meanings of the terms cholo and cholito. This will take more than a simple word search. Explore various urban dictionary and online explanations, and come up with what you think is the most accurate composite explanation based on what you discovered.

## Post-Reading Class Discussion Options

1. What is the tone of “Folsom Alley” or the speaker’s own attitude towards the events of the story? Explain how you know. Cite specific places in the text that support your answers.
2. How does the speaker remember the boys who later became gang members? In what ways do this and other memories affect her decision to live in East Los Angeles?

## Text-Dependent Questions

1. Is there a resolution at the end of “Folsom Alley”? Citing examples from the text, explain why or why not.
2. How is the speaker different from her partner? Compare and contrast the speaker and her partner using evidence from the text.
3. Read the following passage from “Folsom Alley”:  
 “When he comes home that night, he comes to the room in the dark, takes off his pants, takes the bullet from his shirt pocket places it back on the dresser, then throws the shirt to the floor. This

will be his evening ritual for the next week before he leaves it on my dresser where it will collect dust.”

What is a “ritual”? What message is the ritual with the bullet intended to convey?

4. Based on clues from the text, speculate about the nature of the speaker’s relationship with her sister. Who is the speaker more like, her sister or her partner? Cite examples from the text to explain your answer.
5. How does the speaker use foreshadowing throughout “Folsom Alley” to prepare us for the scene with her son, Miles, at the end of the story?
6. Look closely at the photograph by Graeme Fordyce. What do you see in the photograph? Discuss why this photograph was chosen as the illustration. What do the various photograph elements symbolize and how do those symbols connect to “Folsom Alley”?

## Writing Exercises

### Narrative

In “Folsom Alley,” the speaker makes a choice to stay in her home neighborhood even though it’s unsafe. People have reasons for their choices even when they’re not consciously aware of them.

Write a short story with a protagonist who lives in a place that you consider to be unsafe. Write your story from the third-person point of view. In your story, explore the protagonist’s reasons for living in this place. The protagonist may or may not be aware of his or her reasons.

### Descriptive

Describe your home. Using details of your home’s interior, exterior, and the street you live on, create a vivid picture that convey not just the details of your home’s appearance, but what makes your home special, interesting, unique — or the opposite of these things. (You may also choose to describe the home of a relative or of a close friend if that makes it easier for you to be clear and specific.)

### Analysis

Write an essay analyzing and discussing the notion of safety. What does it mean to be physically safe? What does it mean to be emotionally safe? Are there other kinds of safety? Are we ever completely safe — is that possible? How and when is it important to be more safe? Discuss the notion of safety in relation to “Folsom Alley” and the speaker’s choice to stay in her home neighborhood. Do a quick Internet search and look at at least three different explanations of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. Once you have a good general understanding of this concept, reflect on how it affects our notions of safety, and how it may be affecting the speaker’s choices.

## Complementary Reading Text

The classic poem “Life’s Scars” by Ella Wheeler Wilcox is about the pain that loved ones can inflict on each other—willfully or not—and how it’s a pain that cuts more deeply than others. In “The Brooklyn Tolstoy,” the father and daughter both hurt each other deeply, and yet their love for each other is great.

The poem “The Cave of the Unborn” by Thomas Hardy expresses the anguish of introducing a new human life into a world filled with injustice and violence. In “Folsom Alley,” the speaker struggles with exposing her own child to the realities of life in their neighborhood and the world.

After reading the poem, write for 10 minutes in response to the following journal prompt:

What is “innocence”? Is there ever a time when humans are completely innocent of violence or injustice? Begin your writing by freely speculating on the existence of innocence. And, if it exists, its loss. Next, discuss the concepts of innocence and innocence lost as it pertains to the following: the poem, your life, and the boy, Miles, in “Folsom Alley.”

Be prepared to discuss your thoughts with your class.

### **The Cave of the Unborn**

*By Thomas Hardy*

I rose at night and visited  
The Cave of the Unborn,  
And crowding shapes surrounded me  
For tidings of the life to be,  
Who long had prayed the silent Head  
To speed their advent morn.

Their eyes were lit with artless trust;  
Hope thrilled their every tone:  
“A place the loveliest, is it not?  
A pure delight, a beauty-spot  
Where all is gentle, pure and just  
And?? violence?? is unknown?”

My heart was anguished for their sake;  
I could not frame a word;  
But they descried my sunken face  
And seemed to read therein, and trace

The news which Pity would not break  
Nor Truth leave unaverred.

And as I silently retired  
I turned and watched them still:  
And they came helter-skelter out,  
Driven forward like a rabble rout  
Into the world they had so desired,  
By the all-immanent Will.

## Activity Options

### Classroom Activity One

In “Folsom Alley,” the speaker expresses a deep connection to her East Los Angeles roots. Work in student teams to learn more about the history of East Los Angeles by studying the Chicano Movement of the 1960s and the “East L.A. Blowouts” of 1968online.\*

In your student teams, read the list of goals and demands made by the students in the East L.A. Blowouts. Working with your teacher and administration, investigate how many of these goals and demands have and haven’t been enacted in schools. For the ones that haven’t been enacted, what are the reasons given? Make sure to record in writing the answers you discover.

Once each team has completed their research, have students report on their findings to the class. A presenter should be chosen from each group to share what they learned about The Chicano Movement and the East L.A. Blowouts. Students should also discuss what demands have and haven’t been met in schools.

After the reports are given, students should discuss in their groups how they would update the list of proposals made by East L.A. high school students to the Board of Education. What would they change? What would they keep? What would they add?

Post a large sheet of butcher paper on the classroom wall, using markers and a student recorder with great handwriting, have the student teams once again report back and brainstorm a new set of proposals. Conduct a voting process to have students narrow down and agree upon their new proposals together.

Create a final list on butcher paper and keep the final posted in the classroom.

\* Resource: “East L.A. Blowouts: Walking Out for Justice in the Classrooms” by Kelly Simpson. Published March 7, 2012 on [www.KCET.org](http://www.KCET.org).

## Classroom Activity Two

In “Folsom Alley,” the speaker references the Drug War of the 1980s:

“It was the eighties and Reagan was conducting a war on drugs in our living room.”

The Drug War of this time period had a strong impact on Los Angeles neighborhoods and communities. Using Internet resources, work in teams of three students to research the Drug War in Los Angeles in the Eighties. Designate one person in the group as a note taker who will write down a list of key aspects of and issues related to the Drug War. For example: How did the Drug War lead to increased rates of incarceration, and how has that continued to affect communities?

Each team should share their key points with the rest of the class. After doing so, have each team decide on one Drug War-related issue — that’s not the same as any other team’s — to research in depth.

Complete the research in teams and have each team choose one person to be the presenter for the group. This person will present a report on the chosen issue to the rest of the class.

Classmates should be prepared to take notes during each other’s reports and to ask questions and conduct discussions about the issues in class.

## Home Activity

How long has your family called your neighborhood home? Conduct an interview of a parent or guardian, and ask the following questions:

- \* Where did they grow-up? How would they describe their childhood neighborhood?
- \* How did their neighborhood change over time?
- \* Do they have a special attachment to where they grew up? Why or why not?
- \* Do they have a special attachment to your current neighborhood? Why or why not?

Write a short biography of your parent or guardian using the answers to these questions.

## Guest Speaker

Invite a local Sociology professor with expertise in justice and equality in Los Angeles’s urban communities to speak to the class. Currently recommended is Professor Manuel Pastor at the University of Southern California.

Ask the professor to begin by explaining what their area of study — Sociology — is all about and how and why it is important and can contribute to positive change in Los Angeles.

Then have the professor discuss the complicated history and ongoing socio-economic factors that enable gang activity to thrive in East Los Angeles. Conduct an open class discussion about some of the issues raised.

Have students take notes during the visit. Follow the visit with an essay writing assignment in which students reflect on what was discussed and what they learned.

Alternative: Both the author and the illustrator of “Folsom Alley” are Los Angeles-area residents. Invite one or both to speak with your class.

## Field Trip

### Option 1:

Learn about the history of Mexican Americans in Los Angeles. Organize a class trip to La Plaza De Cultura y Artes in Downtown Los Angeles. Learn more here: <http://lapca.org> (<http://lapca.org>).

Follow the trip with a writing assignment to reflect on the connections between history and loyalty to one’s “home.”

### Option 2:

Map how the East Los Angeles neighborhoods have changed and morphed over the past century. Organize a class visit to the Los Angeles Central Library in Downtown Los Angeles.

Begin by touring the library and learning about its architecture and history. Complete the tour with a curated visit to the library’s maps collection. Work with librarians to locate and explore maps of the East Los Angeles neighborhoods, including Brooklyn Heights, Boyle Heights, City Terrace, and Independent East Los Angeles as they have changed over time. If possible, have the librarians pull demographic information that charts changes in the East Los Angeles populations and compare this with the changing maps.

Have students specifically locate the area of City Terrace mentioned in “Folsom Alley.”

At school, have students complete a journal entry discussing how mapping the area mentioned in the story contributes to their connection to the story’s events.

Los Angeles Central Library: <http://www.lapl.org/branches/central-library> (<http://www.lapl.org/branches/central-library>)

### **Option 3:**

Get to know an elected official. Although gang violence in East Los Angeles isn’t as bad as it was a few decades ago, it continues to be an issue. Have students research current political and police/ Sheriff policies and responses to the issue of gang violence in this region of Los Angeles and write a report on these policies.

Once they have completed the report, organize a visit to the office of the 1st District for the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors — currently held by Supervisor Hilda Solis.

Prior to their visit, make sure the students understand the role of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and that they have read the biography for the current First District Supervisor. Students should work in teams to formulate a set of questions to ask regarding improving neighborhood life, keeping schools safe, and reducing gang violence in the East Los Angeles area.

At the visit, ensure that students have an opportunity to present their questions and hear responses from the Supervisor and her staff. A designated “speaker” from each student team to present the questions is recommended.

Have students take notes during the visit. Following the visit, have students write a report discussing what they learned, how the questions were answered, and whether and why they were or were not satisfied with the answers.

Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors: <http://www.bos.co.la.ca.us> (<http://www.bos.co.la.ca.us>)

## **TEST PREPARATION COMPONENT**

### **Activity:**

Use the “double-bubble map” below to compare and contrast the mother’s life experiences and way of looking at the world with that of her young son. You may wish to focus on each character’s perception of the morning walk to school described in Rebecca Gonzales’s “Folsom Alley.”

Instructions for double-bubble map: In the five bubbles connected only to the mother, bullet note the key elements of her character. In the five bubbles stemming only from the son, bullet note the key elements unique to his character. Use the center five bubbles to note the similarities of both mother and son.

### **Writing Prompt:**

In one paragraph, write a diary entry describing the morning from the son’s perspective. In another paragraph, write a diary entry describing the same morning from the mother’s own perspective. Be sure to draw on concrete details from the story, as well as the observations from your double-bubble map.

## **COMMON CORE STANDARDS REFERENCE**

*This story and its exercises are appropriate for 9-12th grade. Ninth-grade standards are cited.*

### **Pre-Reading & Themes Activity Options**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3 above.)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

### **Vocabulary Activity Options**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 9-10 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.4.A Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

## Post-Reading Class Discussion Options

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.C: Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.D: Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.

## Text-Dependent Question Options

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3 above.)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when

appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 9-10 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 9-10 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

## Writing Exercise Options

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.3.A: Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.3.D: Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3 above.)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when

appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

## Complementary Reading Text Writing Exercise

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3 above.)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.6: Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

## Activity Options

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.4: Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.2: Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.C: Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.D: Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3 above.)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.