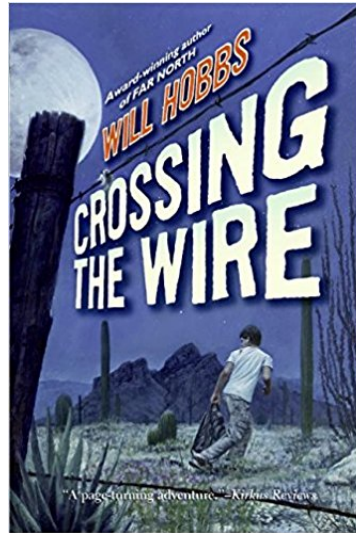


Crossing the Wire



ISBN-13	978-0060741402
ISBN-10	0-06-074140-6
Author	Will Hobbs
Publisher	HarperTrophy
Copyright	2006
Lexile	670L
Genre	Realistic fiction
Synopsis	Driven by hunger and responsibility for his family, Victor Flores embarks on a dangerous journey from Mexico to the United States. Having no money to pay smugglers, Victor has to make it on his own and survive where many have been injured or killed.
Themes	Immigration and Migration; Resilience

Character-Based Literacy Program Independent Study

Lesson Plan, *Crossing the Wire*, Week 1



PREPARE

Background Gather background knowledge about a place, time, event, person, or thing.



Kindness Requires Empathy. Kindness is the desire to lift others' spirits, help the ones in need, and mend relationships. Kindness requires that I take the time to listen, understand, and take action to benefit other people and the world.

Who are the Coyotes?

Coyotes are people who smuggle humans illegally across borders. They charge high fees for their services which may also include document forgery and bribes to law enforcement officials. Coyotes may be hired at the immigrant's hometown or closer to the border. Many coyotes work as part of smuggling organizations or networks. They may smuggle people by truck, bus, boat, or by foot.

What Drives Immigration from Guatemala to Mexico?

Land distribution in Guatemala has been highly unequal. Less than 3% of the farms in Guatemala use nearly two-thirds of agricultural land in the country. Indigenous Guatemalans from Maya ancestry are particularly likely to be driven from land and experience job insecurity. As they struggle to provide for their families, may migrate to Mexico. Many Indians emigrated from Guatemala to the State of Chiapas in Mexico. Living in poverty, they are typically employed in farms and in the service sector (e.g., cleaning, cooking).

Text-to-world connection (p.18): "All those years she had welcomed me into her beautiful home, a dark-faced Indian kid from Chiapas who lived on dirt floors and without electricity." What details in the text tell us about Victor and his childhood?

What is Labor Migration?

Labor migration accounts for nearly two-thirds of the migration in the world. It is moving out of one's country or county of residence to seek employment. Many children and adolescents in rural and urban areas of some Mexican states grow up without the everyday physical presence of their biological fathers, due to labor migration. Older siblings who take care of their mother and younger siblings, such as Victor, may also become migrant workers if they cannot find other ways of supporting their families.

Who are the Vigilantes?

A vigilante means "guard" in Spanish. Vigilantes are Mexican and American civilians who take the law into their own hands to chase criminals such as drug cartels and illegal immigrants and turn them over to the law enforcement authorities. These private groups

are not endorsed by the US border patrol. While these civilians believe they protect the borders, they may cause harm due to their extremist views and violent behaviors.

Where are the Peloncillo Mountains?

The Peloncillo Mountains are located approximately 70 miles from the U.S.-Mexico border, near the Arizona–New Mexico border. The elevations range from 2,500 feet to 6,300 feet. The mountains are characterized by numerous, cliffs and canyons.

What is Upward Socioeconomic Mobility?

Upward socioeconomic mobility is the movement of people from one social class or economic level to another by increasing their wealth. An important kind of socioeconomic mobility is moving out of poverty. According to Mexico's multidimensional poverty measure, upward mobility out of poverty should be measured in terms of improved health, housing, education, access to food, as well as income.

Word Wall Here are fifteen vocabulary words to add to the Word Wall.

Encourage students to identify additional words in Spanish as they continue reading the book. Provide links to websites such as <http://www.spanishcentral.com/> for Spanish to English translation.

hermano (2)	cautiousness (3)	destination (4)	campesino (13)	comida (14)
subsidies (19)	stumbled (20)	exasperation (21)	pained (28)	mojado (33)
crumpled (41)	silhouettes (44)	lurking (47)	inspection (59)	deported (61)
colonnades (77)	stranded (81)	scowl (85)	veered (85)	gruffly (89)
senseless (97)	spurred (101)	embankment (105)	burrowed (110)	gruffly (89)

READ

Review Review the timeline from the beginning every day.

Start at the beginning and review the story so far

- Mention the setting and main character
- Point to each timeline item as you quickly review it

Read Read the selection.

Read pages 1–115 in the book, *Crossing the Wire*.

RESPOND

Timeline List the 15-20 most important on the timeline.

Think about what you read today and begin your timeline

- First, *fix the facts*: who, what, when, where, why
- Then, decide on the most important events and begin your timeline with these.

Over the course of the next week, you will be required to read a number of pages. It would be best if you spread the reading out over the week and not try to do everything at the last minute before your next appointment.

Map Add to ongoing class activities like a KWL chart or map: Mark key places in Victor's journey.

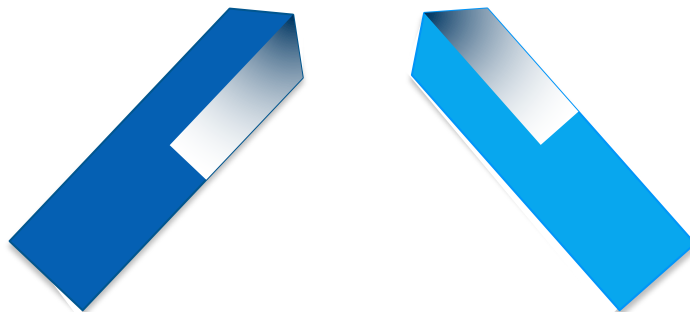
1. Print or draw a map that shows: 1. Mexico's border with Guatemala; 2. The General Motors plant in Silao, in the state of Guanajuato in Mexico.
2. On your map, show the road from Silao, Guanajuato, Mexico to Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico.
3. Find and circle Acaponeta, Nayarit, Mexico, Mazatlan, Sinaloa, Mexico and, Nogales, Sonora, Mexico.
4. Draw a route from Nogales, Sonora, Mexico to Agua Prieta, Sonora, Mexico.
5. Circle the Peloncillo Mountains and the Chiricahua Mountains in Arizona. Draw a route from the Chiricahua Mountains to Wilcox, Arizona.

EXPLORE

Activity Explore the reading more deeply with a visual or oral language activity.

The book, *Crossing the Wire*, describes a difficult journey. To this journey, Victor takes not only his physical backpack but also his feelings, attitudes, and hopes. You will use the graphic organizer "Victor's Travel Bag" to document how Victor felt and what he thought during his journey. Write one sentence in each box ("Victor's hopes," and "Victor's fears") for Chapters 1–3; 4–6; 7–9; 10–12; and, 13–15.

Victor's Travel Bag (Week 1)



Victor's hopes

Chapters 1–3

Chapters 4–6

Chapters 7–9

Chapters 10–12

Chapters 13–15

Victor's fears

Chapters 1–3

Chapters 4–6

Chapters 7–9

Chapters 10–12

Chapters 13–15

Discussion Ask discussion questions.

Answer the key questions. Use evidence from the text.

Chapters 1–3

1. What did Rico carry in a glass jar?
2. Why did Victor tell Rico he should be afraid?
3. Why does Victor want to travel to the United States?

Chapters 4–6

1. Why is it so hard for Mexican farmers to sell their corn?
2. Why does Victor want to travel to the United States?
3. How does Victor's mother respond to his request for her blessing?
4. Why did the policeman think that Victor was not a Mexican citizen?

Chapters 7–9

1. Why was Victor afraid of being deported to Guatemala?
2. Who is Julio?
3. When listening to Julio's story about working in the US, why did six dollars per hour seemed like a fortune to Victor?

Chapters 10–12

1. Why didn't Victor follow Julio through the storm tunnel?
2. Under what conditions did Miguel allow Victor to join him?
3. Describe the hike that Victor and Miguel took together to the border.

Chapters 13–15

1. How did Miguel help Victor continue the journey on his own?
2. What did Victor do when he faced the Puma?
3. Why didn't Miguel trust the person in the helicopter?

Analyze the key paragraph.

Key Paragraph, p. 7

"I felt queasy. Rico had grown up knowing he was supposed to stay home, nearby, like his sister in Silao. If he did well at the technical school, he would be able to get a job where his brother-in-law worked, putting together the Suburbans at the General Motors plant."

Instructions

1. Highlight the sentence that conveys Victor's feelings. Write in your own words how Victor felt.
2. Create a two-column table. On the right side write what Rico was supposed to do. On the left side, write what he wanted to do.

Key Paragraph, p. 35

“It’s the song of my tierra... I looked around at the mojadados surrounding me and found that I was not the only one dabbing at tears. Under the bill of his black baseball cap, even the eyes of the rough-looking loco across the aisle looked moist.”

Instructions

1. Highlight the sentence that conveys Victor’s feelings. Write in your own words how Victor felt.
2. Why did the people on the bus feel emotional when they listened the song about their homeland (Tierra in Spanish)?

Key Paragraph, p. 66

“Below the hills, the tall metal border wall, topped with barbed wire, was bathed in stadium lights from one end of the city to the other. On the American side, a strip of bare ground was patrolled by green-and-white trucks that Julio said were the Border Patrol.”

Instructions

1. Highlight the words and phrases that make the border sound scary or unapproachable.
2. Write about Victor ability to observe details. So far, how did this ability save his life?

Key Paragraph, p. 92

“Don’t be sorry for me, or for yourself, either, when the bad things happen. You have to stay strong for your family. You have to be a man.”

Instructions

1. Why did Miguel give this advice to Victor?
2. In your opinion, is it a good advice?

Key Paragraph, p. 97

“In the States, it’s possible to start from the ground and reach the top of the tree. In Mexico, if you are born poor, there are no branches within reach, and the trunk is coated with lard.

My friend—his name is Ricco—was born poor, yet his father built him a ladder. Until a couple of weeks ago, he was in school in Silao. He could have learned a trade and got a good job, yet he ran away to the States.

Who’s to blame him? In El Norte, there’s a lot more fruit on the tree...”

Instructions

1. Analyze the metaphor of the tree. How does the image of the tree help understand the feelings of helplessness of the poor in Mexico?

2. According to this conversation, there are two main factors that affect people's ability to find a good job. What are they?

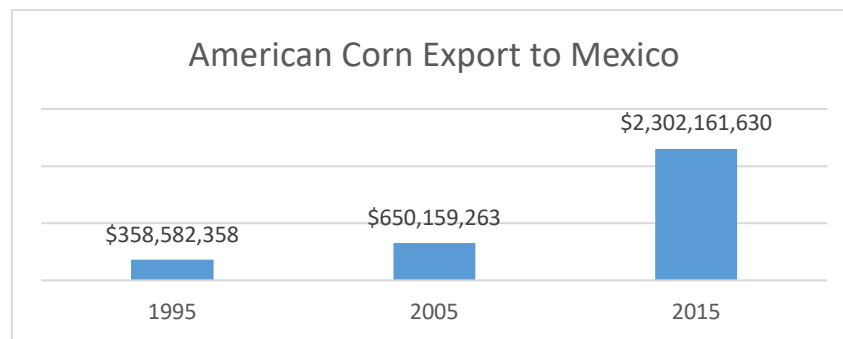
EXTEND

Write a short product based on today's prompt to connect to the unit theme.

Chapters 1–3

Write a paragraph describing the informational graph, below. Connect it to the following quote (p. 16):

At the time of last summer's disappointment, I tried to get Rico's father to explain why the prices kept going down every year. "Here is the reason," Senor River said with his voice beginning to tremble. "All over Mexico, people are buying less and less of our own corn for cornmeal. American corn is cheaper."

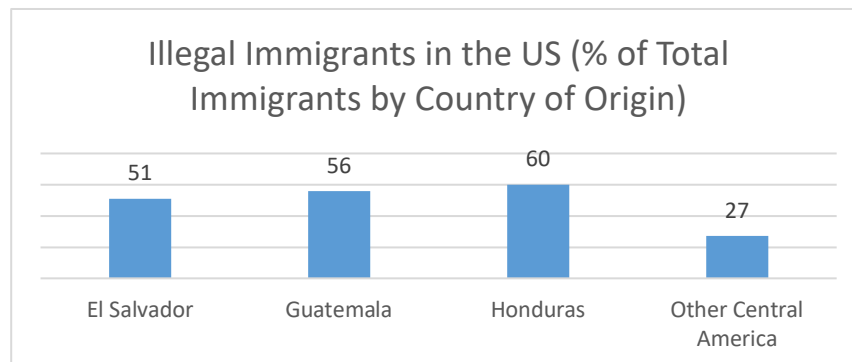


Source: United States Department of Agriculture

Chapters 4–6

Write a paragraph describing the informational graph, below. Connect it to the following quote (pp. 37-38):

"Who are they looking for?" "Guatemalans, Hondurans, Salvadorans, Nicaraguans, South Americans—anybody who doesn't have the proper documents to be in Mexico." "Why do they care?" "It makes the Americans happy."



Source: Pew Research Center, 2015

Chapters 7–9

Connect the friendship between Victor and Julio to this unit's theme: Kindness Requires Empathy. How did telling each other their life stories helped the boys form a friendship? Write one or two paragraphs. Use at least one quote from the book.

Chapters 10–12

Connect the events in Chapters 10–12 to the unit's theme: Kindness Requires Empathy. In what ways are Victor's conversations with Miguel different than the conversations he used to have with Julio?

Chapters 13–15

Connect the events in Chapters 13–15 to the unit's theme: Kindness Requires Empathy. In what ways did Miguel show kindness to Victor?

Character-Based Literacy Program Independent Study Lesson Plan, *Crossing the Wire*, Week 2



PREPARE

Background Gather background knowledge about a place, time, event, person, or thing.



Kindness Requires Empathy. Kindness is the desire to lift others' spirits, help the ones in need, and mend relationships. Kindness requires that I take the time to listen, understand, and take action to benefit other people and the world.

What Do Volunteers Do in the Sonoran Desert?

Many unidentified illegal migrants are buried in the desert separating Mexico and the US. A common cause of death is lack of water and food while trying to cross the desert by foot when the local temperatures surpass 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Volunteers from the organization Border Angels (Angels de la Frontera) buried their bodies and marked their graves with crosses that say "No Olvidados" (not forgotten). These volunteers also work to prevent deaths in the desert by placing 1- or 2-gallon water jugs along high-traffic migrant paths in the desert.

What Cities are Located at the Arizona-Sonora Border?

Migration between the state of Sonora, Mexico and Arizona can take place through six points of entry: San Luis, Arizona to San Luis Rio Colorado, Sonora; Lukeville, Arizona to Sonoyta, Sonora; Sasabe, Arizona to El Sasabe, Sonora; Nogales, Arizona to Nogales, Sonora; Naco, Arizona to Naco, Sonora; and, Douglas, Arizona to Agua Prieta, Sonora. The cities on both sides of the border share many things in common, including history and culture. For example, Sonora natives worked and lived in Arizona before it became part of the US. The food, music, dance, and art in these cities were influenced by the border and the geographic landscape shared by the cities.

What is the Volume of Drug Trafficking at the Southern Border?

Every year, US Border Patrol seizes millions of pounds of drugs carried by drug smugglers, including Marijuana, Cocaine, and heroin. Ninety-nine percent of these drugs are captured at the Southern Border. The highest volume of seizures has been documented in Tucson, Arizona.

What Do We Know about the Jaguar (Mexican Tigre)?

Jaguars have once lived in the US, especially in Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas. However, hunters and predator-control agents brought them close to extinction in the 20th century. Between 1996 and 2017, at least seven male jaguars from Mexico, have been seen in southern Arizona and New Mexico. These appearances encouraged efforts by biologists to restore the jaguar population in the US. After several years of research and a lawsuit, the US Fish and Wildlife Service declared jaguars an

endangered species, and a recovery plan was created in 2016. This plan aims to protect and improve the habitat of jaguars.

Word Wall Define and add to the Word Wall.

bowlegged (117)	stealth (118)	compound (123)	pocked (125)	scrubby (131)
unsteady (143)	crest (144)	limbo (146)	putrid (147)	congregated (148)
vaulting (186)	ledge (188)	abandon (191)	switchback (180)	scramble (181)
drowsiness (187)	ledge (187)	apparition (188)	abandon (191)	magnificent (195)

READ

Review Review the timeline from the beginning every day.

Start at the beginning and review the story so far

- Mention the setting and main character
- Point to each timeline item as you quickly review it

Read Read the selection.

Read pages 116–214 in the book, *Crossing the Wire*.

RESPOND

Timeline List the 15-20 most important on the timeline.

Think about what you read today and begin your timeline

- First, *fix the facts*: who, what, when, where, why
- Then, decide on the most important events and begin your timeline with these.

Over the course of the next week, you will be required to read a number of pages. It would be best if you spread the reading out over the week and not try to do everything at the last minute before your next appointment.

Map Add to ongoing class activities like a KWL chart or map: Mark key places in Victor's journey.

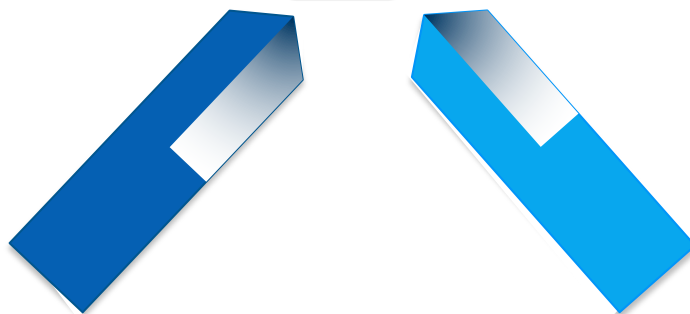
1. Identify and mark on your map a possible route for Rico's journey from Los Árboles to Nogales.
2. On a map, circle Altar, Mexico, Sasabe, Mexico and Sasabe, Arizona. Identify and draw a possible route that the drug smugglers used.
3. On a map, circle Baboquivari Canyon, Arizona.
Reflect: What is the difficulty level of Rico, Victor, and Torre's hike?
4. On a map, circle Winchester Heights, Arizona.

EXPLORE

Activity Explore the reading more deeply with a visual or oral language activity.

The book, *Crossing the Wire*, describes a difficult journey. To this journey, Victor takes not only his physical backpack but also his feelings, attitudes, and hopes. You will use the graphic organizer “Victor’s Travel Bag” to document how Victor felt and what he thought during his journey. Today, you will add one sentence in each box: “Victor’s hopes,” and “Victor’s fears,” for chapters 16–18; 19–21; 22–24; and, 25–28.

Victor's Travel Bag (Week 2)



Victor's hopes

Chapters 16–18

Chapters 19–21

Chapters 22–24

Chapters 25–28

Victor's fears

Chapters 16–18

Chapters 19–21

Chapters 22–24

Chapters 25–28

Discussion Answer the key questions using evidence from the text.

Chapters 16–18

1. Why does Victor feel he is running out of time?
2. What was the problem with the deal Rico made with the coyote?

Chapters 19–21

1. What plan does Victor propose to Rico?
2. What plan do they follow in reality?

Chapters 22–24

1. Why did Victor and Rico escape?
2. How did Victor hold off Jara?

Chapters 25–28

1. Why did Rico's brother leave his house in the middle of the night?
2. Compare Victor and Rico's attitudes towards working in the US in Chapters 1 and 2 and in Chapter 28. How have their attitudes changed?

Analyze key paragraphs.

Key Paragraph, p. 126

"The green shirts had nothing to say. We were walked to one last gate, which was padlocked. It was opened, and we filed through. I watched the gate close behind me, heard the lock click shut. The high metal wall ran as far as I could see. It was a strange feeling being locked inside your own country."

Instructions

1. Highlight the words that indicate what Victor saw, heard, and felt.
2. Answer: Why did Victor compare Mexico to jail in this paragraph?

Key Paragraph, p. 152

"I told myself to remember that millions of wets, including Rico's father and mine, had been at the mercy of coyotes. Still, it was impossible not to loathe Jara. For such a vile person to sport El Christo Rey on his chest, this was a terrible sin."

Instructions

1. Highlight the words the indicate Victor's feelings.
2. Answer: Why was disturbing about Jara's tattoo?

Key Paragraph, p. 179

"I do a job that needs to be done," Torre replied, "I enforce the law. Yes, we do all we can do to slow the flood of illegals, but I also save many lives. And we catch some

dangerous criminals. Listen, I can't stand here and argue with you. My head hurts bad, and my partner is dead. The air went out of Rico's anger."

Instructions

Create a table that contrasts the Torre's job responsibilities that Rico agrees and disagrees with.

Key Paragraph, p. 214

"Rico's journey home was going to be straight as an arrow. My journey in search of work would take me in all directions across the United States, always looking over my shoulder. All I knew was, I had to survive here, so that my family would survive at home. It might be many long years before I saw them again."

Instructions

Answer: How did Victor see his future years in the United States? In your opinion, how did he feel about his future?

EXTEND

Write a short product based on today's prompt to connect to the unit theme.

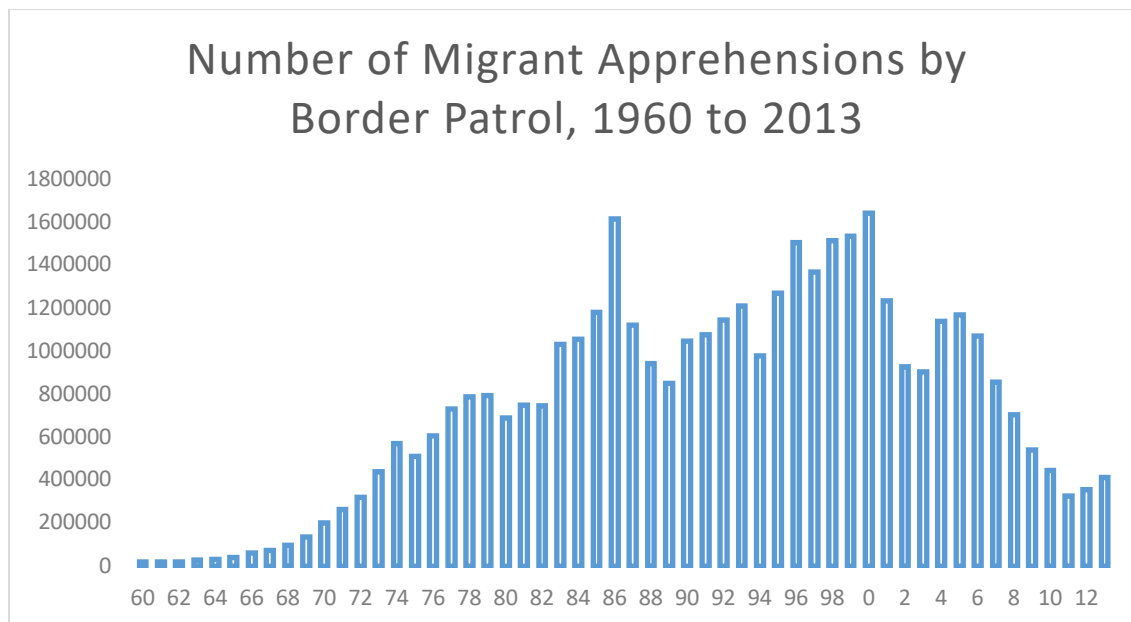
Chapters 16–18

Connect the text to the unit's theme: Kindness Requires Empathy. In what ways did Miguel show kindness to Victor?

Chapters 19–21

Review the informational graph, below. Write one or two paragraphs describing trends of years and comparing immigration in 2004 and 2005 (the time this book was written) to other years. Read the author's note on page 2015. Why did the number of migrants decline in 2001 and 2002? Based on the reasons that drove Victor to the US, why did the number of migrants rise in 2004?

Connect today's reading to the unit's theme, Kindness Requires Empathy. How did Dave Hanson show kindness to Victor and Rico? Why was he kind to them? How can the story of Victor and Rico inspire kindness in more people?



Source: www.WOLA.org

Chapters 22–24

Connect the text to the unit's theme, Kindness Requires Empathy. How did Victor and Rico show kindness to the patrolman?

Chapters 25–28

Connect the text to the unit's theme, Kindness Requires Empathy. How did Dave Hanson show kindness to Victor and Rico? Why was he kind to them? How can the story of Victor and Rico inspire kindness in more people?

Character-Based Literacy Program Independent Study Lesson Plan, *Crossing the Wire*, Week 3

Final Assignment

Expository Essay

Your final writing product will be titled, *The Relationship Between Kindness and Perseverance*. Using the paragraphs, you crafted over the last weeks, discuss how kindness to others is critical to their ability to overcome challenges. Refer to the dangerous journey that Victor had from Mexico to the United States and the kindness of people who helped him survive.

Begin your essay with a well-defined thesis statement or the key idea you will discuss and support with examples. Use the paragraphs you have previously completed to support each claim. The essay should be concise – avoid repetition and redundancy in statements.

You may have to re-write some sentences or paragraphs from your daily projects and writings. You may also need to add leading or unifying sentences at the beginning or end of paragraphs to aid your reader in following the direction of your essay.

Create a timeline to organize your work schedule:

What	When
Create a thesis statement.	
Create an outline.	
Draft an introductory paragraph.	
Complete a first draft.	
Edit based on feedback from an assigned reviewer.	
Complete the final draft.	