

arriving in a new place. Like Antin, consider not only the place you came to but also the place you came from.

Before you read Rosalie's response to this writing topic, read "The Promised Land" (pages 78–81).

Exploring Ideas: Making Lists

After reading Antin's essay several times, making notes in the margins, and writing journal entries both about the essay and about the assignment, Rosalie decided to sort through her own responses as well as Antin's responses by making lists. Rosalie first listed Antin's response to her arrival and noted that Antin's strongest responses were to differences between her native country and her new home and to memories of her former life. Once she saw this pattern, Rosalie returned to Antin's essay to gather additional details related to the contrast between the old and the new.

As she listed Antin's responses, Rosalie began to see that Antin's first impressions of her new home had some similarities to Rosalie's own memories of her first venture onto the campus where she now attended classes. In addition, Antin's thoughts of her old life prompted Rosalie to recall memories of her own previous schooling. She then made a list of her own responses, corresponding to Antin's observations, noting where she saw similarities and where she saw differences.

Antin's Responses to Arrival in United States

My Responses—First Time on Campus

Met by father; acts like guide

Accompanied by cousin;
constant advice

Amazed by big buildings and brick sidewalks—had not seen anything like it before

Surprised at size of campus and at number of classroom buildings—almost like a city;
drove around three times

Interprets people at open
windows as friendly

Everyone seemed busy with their own stuff—interpreted as unfriendly

Impressed with new home; mainly only had necessities; some things strange: "mysterious iron structure" turns out to be stove; mainly impressed because these things were "American"

Looked in empty classrooms—could these ever be "home"? Saw computers in many places—anxiety about using them; but impressed with the bare-walled classrooms; seem filled with serious intention

First meal; father gave them
new food (bananas, had to give
up on them); tin cans of food
not cooked

First meal in cafeteria “mystery meat”; unidentifiable mixed vegetables

Education free; schooling
important because of this

Education not free; important because of this

People who are angels “of deliverance”

Admissions people who
helped me

Getting rid of “despised
immigrant clothing”

Getting rid of “despised housewife clothing”

Antin’s Memories

My Memories

Used to be rich; new place
less fancy

Used to think college only
for “other” people (smarter, richer)

Everything in Russia cost money: school; lights to go through street

High school was “free”; you
got your books “free,” your
paper “free”—but you didn’t feel free

Officials told you what to do

Teachers and principal told you what to do

Writing the Draft

After making these lists, Rosalie saw that her experiences on her first visit to campus could, indeed, qualify as worthy material for an essay expressing her thoughts and feelings as she arrived at a new and strange place. She read “The Promised Land” one

more time, noticing particularly Antin's use of details to create the sense of her experience; and then she began drafting. The draft printed here shows what she came up with after writing and revising three other drafts.

As you read this draft, notice that Rosalie uses some of the points in her list, but not all of them. Part of the process of drafting is to decide which ideas to use and which to eliminate. You do not have to work every thought from your prewriting into your draft. Notice also that Rosalie's paper is clearly organized. She arranges the events of her first trip to campus chronologically. And when she refers to memories in the past, she provides *transitions* (connecting words and phrases) to show how those memories relate to her main narrative (the story of her going to sign up for the class). Working toward a clear organization is also an important part of drafting.

MY PROMISED LAND

Rosalie Bryant

I sat in my kitchen, accompanied by a sink full of dirty dishes, a dog whining to be fed, and two laundry baskets heaped with my son's and daughter's clothes. As I drank my second cup of coffee, I thought about the long morning ahead while the two of them were at school. To avoid looking at the sink, the dog, or the laundry, I grabbed the nearest piece of reading material. Was it just by chance that what I grabbed was the flyer from Mt. Suffolk Community College?

Every year, I received these flyers, and every year I read them from cover to cover, looking at all the classes offered and thinking about what they might be like. Some sounded interesting, like "The Child in Literature" and "Parents and the Schools." Others sounded so intimidating; I couldn't understand the titles or the explanations. My eyes sped right past "Introduction to Finite Math" and "Principles of Anatomy and Physiology." This year, the same titles—and some new ones—caught my attention. "You have the time to take a class now," I thought. And I could hear my husband, Paul, encouraging me, "Rosalie, go to school, if you want to!" But other voices quickly came in to squash that idea.

I heard my Uncle Joe, during Christmas vacation of my freshman year in high school. After he looked at my brother's report card and then at mine he said, "Well, Rosalie, good thing you're good-looking 'cause it looks like Dave got the brains in the family." Uncle Joe wasn't the only one who thought I lacked brains. My guidance counselor told me to forget about a college course and recommended that I sign up for classes that would help me get a job. "You'll need to work until you get married," he said, as if getting married was like going to the bank. (I wish he could see me now, working two nights and Sundays to help make the mortgage payments.) These old voices, and others, echoed in my head and told me I was foolish to think of college.

But I had another voice I could think of—one that had continued to be a support in my life for as long as I could remember. I grabbed the phone and called that "old voice," my cousin Susan, and before I lost my courage, I blurted out to her my thoughts about the college class. Of course, as always, she took right over! "Stay right there," she ordered, "I'm coming to get you." Within fifteen minutes she drove in the yard, and before I knew what was happening, Sue had talked me into getting in the car. "We'll just drive over to the college," she said. "We don't have to go in." Sue is four years older than I am, and she's always been a major support in my life. She never went to college herself, but she reads all the time and she's always giving me books. We talk about what we read, and

once I remember she told me I was “college material.” I don’t know why, but somehow deep inside there was something in me that believed her. Now, here she was literally driving me to college.

As we turned off the highway, following the signs to the college, I felt a large lump growing in my throat and, to accompany the lump, I felt butterflies hatching in my stomach in record numbers. “Let’s just drive around,” I told Sue, in a trembling voice. She started to pull into a parking space, but she looked at me, and I said again, more loudly, “Sue, keep driving!” We drove slowly around the road that surrounds the college. On the third pass by the parking lot, Sue said, “Well, I can do this until I run out of gas.” I guess I must have nodded or something, because we turned into the parking lot and drove by what seemed like hundreds of parked cars as my cousin looked for a place to put her VW Rabbit. Finally, she found a place, and as we got out, I looked over past the parking lot to what looked to me like a whole city of multistory brick buildings. Even if I wanted to sign up for a class, how would I know which building?

As I read Mary Antin’s description of her first day in Boston, I thought of this first day at Mt. Suffolk Community College. Like Mary, I couldn’t stop looking around. Everything seemed so new and different. Mary had her father acting as a guide, and I had Sue who didn’t know anything more about the place than I did but who was firmly giving me orders. “Watch where you’re going! Don’t keep looking around like that! Look serious, like a college student!” Not knowing how to “look like a college student” and not wanting to show any more of my ignorance, I just followed Sue, moving fast to try to keep up with her steady pace. From time to time, I tried to hang back because I was terrified and having a hard time getting my breath, but Sue kept me going.

As we walked, I noticed that most of the other people we saw moved along quickly like my cousin. They all seemed to be looking beyond me or above me; no one smiled or said hello. I thought of the safety of the kitchen I had left. Even the dirty dishes, the unfolded laundry, and the whining dog seemed pleasing and comforting as I thought of them. Why had I ever let myself be talked into this? Or, to be more honest, why had I talked myself into this?

As we got closer to the nearest brick building, Sue stopped one of the hurrying students and asked where you’d sign up for a class. The student kept walking but pointed to a building with large granite steps and a sign that proclaimed “Administration.” Now even Sue slowed down. The granite steps seemed to stretch up forever. I knew I couldn’t climb them, even though several dozen other people were clearly making their way very easily. Finally, Sue took a deep breath and said, “Come on.” I truly don’t know how I got from the bottom to the top of the steps. But once we made it inside the door, things suddenly got much easier.

A large, hand-lettered sign proclaimed “Registration—Continuing Education,” and an arrow pointed at a door that was slightly opened and seemed to invite me in. As I moved through the door, I saw lines of people. Most of them were my age or older, which was a relief, since I had visions of being the only “older woman” on campus. As I looked around, a little dazed with the hum and buzz of so many voices, a very short white-haired woman appeared next to me. Mary Antin uses the phrase “an angel of deliverance” to describe the neighbor who taught her mother to use the stove; in the next few minutes, I came to see the white-haired woman as my fairy godmother.

She introduced herself as Doris Reece, and she explained that she was the Administrative Assistant for the Dean of Continuing Education. I didn't know what to say, but Sue stepped in and said, "My cousin wants to take a class here." Doris looked at me questioningly; and as the lump in my throat began to melt and the butterflies in my stomach started to calm down, I silently nodded. She then sat down with me for a few minutes and suggested that I take English 101 as my first course. I felt better because I love to read, and I knew English would mean reading. After that, I got into line, filled in the forms, and made out the required check. Then Sue and I left. My feelings were entirely changed from when we first arrived on campus. I was a college student at last!

Revising

Rosalie had already done a great deal of revising by the time she got to this third draft.

(For more information on revising and for a revision checklist, see page 36.)

As a final step in revising, she asked a friend of hers, Janice Rule, who was also taking the English class, to read what she had written. She also asked Janice to suggest any improvements that would help her to communicate her experience more effectively. After reading Rosalie's draft, Janice returned it with this note.

Rosalie,

I really like what you've said. You used a lot of details like the dog and the laundry that made me be able to see where you were. Also, you told about things like the "old voices" and you gave examples so that I could also tell how you were feeling. Another thing I liked was that you used conversation, which you quoted so that I also could hear what it was like when you and your cousin Sue were talking.

The one thing I think you should change is your last paragraph. It just seems to come to an end that is too blah and doesn't show me enough about the change you said you had in your feelings. I guess you weren't nervous any more, but I'd like you to explain more what you mean.

Janice

Rosalie thought about what Janice said and, after several tries, came up with this new, revised final paragraph.

Somehow, I got into the right line, filled in the forms, and made out the required check.

As Sue and I left, the granite steps didn't seem so steep. I was amazed to notice there were only five of them. And the students didn't seem so grim or so rushed. Several smiled and nodded to me. I suppose it was because I was smiling so much myself. After so many Septembers of reading the catalogue and throwing it away, I was finally a college student!

Revising means, literally, "re-seeing." Rosalie's revision shows that she did more than just add a detail or two. Instead, she spent time thinking about how she could show Janice (and any other readers) exactly how she felt as she left the administration building. As she reread her paper, she focused on her description of the steps. She realized that the steps had seemed much bigger and higher to her when she went into the building than when she came out. Recognizing this one detail helped her to draft a new conclusion. With other minor changes and proofreading, the fourth draft (the one printed on pages 42-44) with the revised conclusion (preceding this paragraph) became her final paper.

In “Quilts and Women’s Culture” (pages 286–290), Elaine Hedges begins by observing, “Women’s needlework has been a universal form of activity, uniting women of different classes, races, and nations,” and she goes on to delineate both the positive and negative implications of this shared activity.———

ONE STUDENT’S PROCESS FOR INFORMATIVE AND EXPLANATORY WRITING

As an example of an essay that explains, we will consider Harue Hashimoto’s process as she responded to the following assignment:

After reading David Haldane’s “Asian Girls: A Cultural Tug of War,” write an essay that explains a contradiction you see in your own life or in the life of someone you know well. As you write, keep in mind that your writing should lead the reader to see the significance you give to this contradiction.

Before you read Harue’s response to this assignment, you may want to read “Asian Girls: A Cultural Tug of War” (pages 357–361).

Exploring Ideas: Freewriting and Outlining

After reading Haldane’s essay several times, making notes in the margins, and participating in a discussion of the essay, Harue—along with her fellow students—spent the final ten minutes of class doing a *freewriting* exercise in response to one of the topics the instructor suggested. Freewriting is a process that encourages writers to explore the far corners of their minds by writing without stopping (usually for a given period of time). This process can help writers get past a “blocked” feeling and can lead to finding new ideas and approaches at any stage in the writing process. For instance, as you begin a writing project, you might use freewriting to discover or narrow a topic; later, you may again freewrite to find details and examples that will successfully develop a weak or thin section of a draft.

Sometimes, freewriting begins with whatever thought first pops into the writer’s mind; sometimes, it begins with a question, observation, or assignment. When the writer has a specific topic or assignment in mind, this strategy is called *focused freewriting*. Here’s part of the focused freewriting Harue worked on as she began thinking about her topic. So—write about contradiction and do not stop—do not stop—contradict contradict mother says “do not contradict”—father just silent— mother and father I do not understand why mother and father get along—big gap—father simple old Japanese character—shy, vague, conservative—thinks about World War II—“demons”—people who spoke English—mother modern/open-minded—liberal ideas/wanted to study in U.S. Mother wanted English for us—problem with Japanese school system—severe strict—my mother’s teaching—feel like a race horse—just being trained to run a race and win for owner—mother-as-owner/but father, too? He wanted the other side—traditional culture/ calligraphy/flower arrangement/tea ceremony—confusion—confusion —where am I going here?—keep writing—keep writing—confusion—confusion with English—loved English—radio—American songs—language like rhythmical music—problem with grades/not as good as my older sister—turned away from mother’s dream to live through the daughters—father delights to teach Japanese culture/to encourage Japanese womanhood—still no answer—what about these two parts????

As Harue looked at the freewriting, she saw a contradiction between her father’s and mother’s goals for their own lives. She saw additional and related contradictions between

their hopes for their children's lives. Since she was asked to explain the significance she saw in this contradiction, Harue decided to write an informal outline to delineate her mother's values and her father's values.

An informal outline, which a writer uses to think out ideas, does not require roman numerals, capital letters, and so on, as does a formal outline, which would be submitted to an instructor, an editor, or a supervisor at work. Instead, most people who use outlining during the early, discovery stages of writing simply number their ideas as a way of organizing them. Here's the informal outline Harue wrote.

Father

1.
Shy—values quiet contemplation
2.
Conservative—does not like change
3.
Speaks only Japanese—very patriotic
4.
Thinks daughters (and all girls) should learn Japanese arts—takes traditional approach
5.
Goal for daughters: to follow traditional roles of Japanese women—wives, mothers

Mother

1.
Outgoing—values communication, talking to others
2.
Wanted to study in the U.S.—ambitious
3.
Challenges old way of doing things—became a teacher (not a mother who stays at home)
4.
Speaks English as well as Japanese (teaches English)
5.
Thinks daughters (and all girls) should have a chance to be completely educated (same subjects as boys)
- 6.

Goals for daughters: to be competitive, to learn English perfectly (sister better than I am), to study in the U.S.

Conclusions

1.

First tried to please mother

2.

Then felt like failure in languages

3.

Next tried to please father

4.

Now trying to find my own way

Planning and Writing a Draft

After making these outlines, Harue was still not sure what her thesis (main idea) would be. But she knew that her objective (her purpose for writing) would be to explain the contradictions and conflicts she saw between her mother's values and her father's values. She decided to write a *discovery draft*—a draft that would explore the ideas she wanted to explain even though those ideas were not yet clearly focused or fully organized.

As she wrote, she knew she needed to keep in mind her *audience*—those who would read her essay. Of course, her instructor was part of the audience. In addition, she would be working in class with other students as peer editors, so she knew she had to consider them, too.

Harue knew that most people in her class were somewhat familiar with Japanese culture, but she also decided that she needed to explain certain aspects of the Japanese education system. In addition, she knew that some students might be uncomfortable with a discussion of her father's views toward his daughters' education and with her own agreement with some of those views. At first, she thought about giving a detailed explanation of her father's background, including many details about his childhood and his relationship with his parents. In the end, she decided not to take that approach—both because she was afraid it would lead her too far away from her original subject and because she did not want her paper to sound like an apology.

Here is Harue's first draft.

MY FRUSTRATION

I do not understand why my mother and father get along with each other, because certainly there is a big gap between them. My father is a simple old Japanese character, shy, vague and conservative. Because of a long period of isolation from the rest of the world, Japanese have joined together to protect the original race. That is why Japanese think that group harmony is very much more important than individual opinions, and they are concerned about what people think about them. My father, especially, experienced World War II, and at that time he thought the people who spoke English were demons. On the other hand, my mother is more open-minded. She has been interested in English since she was a university student. Once she worked at a foreign embassy as an

interpreter. In addition, when she was a student, she had a chance to study abroad, but her parents, who are also old-type Japanese, opposed it. My mother gave up this chance, but she became an English teacher and she still teaches junior high school students. She can speak her opinion openly and has very liberal ideas.

My mother began to teach me English when I was in the fourth grade. I was filled with the delight of knowing a language totally different from Japanese. English allowed me to have a bright, new world. I was very happy to share the same thing with my mother. I was excited to learn some English letters and words which were like mathematical signs to me. My mother always listened to the English radio station. I still remember that the sound of English speaking was a kind of rhythmical music to me. When I entered junior high school, I really began to study English. I did very good unexpectedly. So I was so awfully delighted with it. My friends who were around me took it for granted because I was the daughter of an English teacher. In addition, even my mother expected me not to disgrace her occupation. The only thing I had to take care of was to keep good grades in English. It invaded the relationship between my mother and me. English was then becoming a burden for me, because I thought that English alone was the glue to connect us.

The Japanese educational system is very severe, strict, and competitive, because the academic background decides the way people are valued in society. That is why Japanese parents hope their children will enter a prestigious university. My mother was no exception. Without thinking of their children's feelings, adults compare their children as either better or inferior to others. I studied so as not to disappoint my mother's expectation and to be superior to others in this vehement competition. I was like a racing horse. I lost myself because I was driven by my purpose, but I still did not have any security. My mother began to seem not like a mother to me but like a Japanese woman with an American mask on her face. I now began to hate English.

My older sister has been so smart that she can speak English without difficulty. I thought that my mother loved her more because she was the daughter my mother expected.

Before I was aware, my English grades went down. I was very lonely, and in my loneliness, I turned to my father's way of thinking. It is his belief that daughters be educated to the old ways. Thinking about his view, I tried to adopt Japanese traditional cultures such as calligraphy, flower arrangement, and doing tea ceremonies instead of learning English. Through practicing those things, I recognized the Japanese spirit. This isolated island, my homeland, had created such a sensitive race and elegant and refined culture. My father was very delighted to teach me about it.

I can see now that the big gap between my mother and father is that of new ideas versus the old ones. I cannot argue which is better except that there is a large frustration in trying to reconcile them. Right now, as a Japanese woman, I see conflicts because I value my home culture, including the isolation from others, yet I also see how much modern Japan has learned from other cultures all over the world. For instance, although my father still remembers World War II and thinks of the United States as an enemy, my mother points out that behind today's Japanese prosperity, there has been American relief. Also, here I am in America where my mother often dreamed to go for study. Although I came with some reluctance, I think again that this country is great. It provides me with relief from the frustration I felt in Japan of having to choose between my mother's view and my father's view. From the time I was a young girl, I wanted only to please one parent or to

please the other. Now, in this country, I see young people who do what they want to do. Now I understand real liberty means not following someone else's ways. Here I can become educated but also value my traditions. I don't have to be my mother or my father. This is my life and I am me.

Revising

After Harue finished writing her discovery draft, she put it away for several days. When she read it again, she immediately noticed several points of concern. To help in the revision process, she jotted down the following questions and observations to use as she worked with peer editors in class workshop sessions, as she visited the campus writing center for tutoring, and as she consulted with her professor during office hours.

Revision Notes

1.
What is my central idea? Should I focus on contradictions between the Japanese education system and the American education system and way of life? On the contradiction between my mother's and father's values? On the contradiction between what my mother wants for me and what I want for myself?
2.
Do all the paragraphs relate to my general subject of contradiction? (Example: Does paragraph 5 get off the topic by talking about my sister?)
3.
I talk more about my mother and her ideas than about my father and his ideas, but the aim of my paper is to compare them and their influence in my life. Should I talk about both the same amount?
4.
Does my conclusion say enough? Does it follow from the stories and examples I have given in the paper?
5.
I have the same ideas in different places. Do I repeat too much?
6.
Is it all right that I use "I" in this paper? In my English classes before I was told not to, but many essays in our textbook do use "I."
7.
Do I use "is" and "was" too much? I did this on my last paper. How can I change these words?
8.
Do I use apostrophes and commas right? I have problems with this.
- 9.

Do I change the tense of the verbs when this is not necessary?

Harue's revision notes fall into three categories. Her first five questions address *global issues*. These questions look at the content and meaning of her essay. When writers revise, they notice many aspects of their writing. Most experienced writers try to focus on the larger, global issues before they move to issues of *style* (which questions 6 and 7 address) or issues of *grammar* and *mechanics* (which questions 8 and 9 address).

THE REVISION PLAN After Harue talked with other students, with her tutor, and with her instructor, she realized that she did need a clearer focus. Her paper definitely had a purpose—to explain the contrasts she saw between her mother's values and her father's values—but her introduction didn't show why Harue saw these conflicting values as important. She realized that although her mother and father were essential to the idea she was explaining, it was her own conflict that was really the subject of the essay. She tried writing a list of several possible thesis statements and finally settled on this one:

From the time of my earliest memory, I've always tried to understand why I am a person who is determined to go forward yet who always feels drawn back toward the past. Recently, as I was thinking about this question, I realized that the conflict I feel within myself is reflected in my mother and father and the values they hold.

As Harue considered how she would use this idea to focus her paper, she at first thought she would eliminate references to her sister and to the Japanese education system, because they didn't seem to be clearly related to her own conflict. After trying this strategy, she realized that she would lose parts of her paper she really liked and that she knew were important to the significance she saw in her parents' differences. So she decided not to drop the story of her sister and the evaluation of the Japanese education system but, rather, to provide transitions that would connect these points more clearly with her central idea.

Harue agreed with her readers that there was no problem with her discussing her mother more than her father. As her revised conclusion notes, her mother's values are the ones that motivated her most strongly as well as the ones she needed most to rebel against. In addition to making the global revisions outlined here, Harue also worked on correcting punctuation and on using more active verbs rather than relying so heavily on forms of the verb *to be*.

After writing several drafts, Harue turned in the following final paper:

MY FRUSTRATION

From the time of my earliest memory, I've always tried to understand why I am a person who is determined to go forward yet who always feels drawn back toward the past. Recently, as I was thinking about this question, I realized that the conflict I feel within myself reflects the values my mother and father hold. I do not understand why my mother and father get along with each other, because certainly a big gap exists between them, which can be represented by the way each one thinks about the English language. My father is a simple, old Japanese character, shy, vague, and conservative. Like many other Japanese people, he thinks that group harmony is very much more important than individual opinions, and he worries about what other people think about him. He thinks that preserving the old ways is best, and he doesn't try to see things in a new way. For

example, he and many of his friends experienced World War II, and at that time they thought the people who spoke English were demons; my father still does not speak English and does not like to hear any of his family speak English.

On the other hand, my mother thinks with a more open mind. She has been interested in English since she was a university student. Once she worked at a foreign embassy as an interpreter. In addition, during her student days, she had a chance to study in the United States, but her parents, who are also old-type Japanese, opposed it. To please her parents, my mother gave up this chance, but she became an English teacher, and now she teaches junior high school students. She speaks her opinion openly and has very liberal ideas. From my early years, I knew my father's beliefs, but my mother was the one who took care of me most of the time. In one way, at least, I was like my father from the beginning: I really cared what other people thought of me. I wanted my mother to think well of me; I wanted to please her. She began to teach me English when I was in the fourth grade, and I was filled with the delight of knowing a language totally different from Japanese. English allowed me to have a bright, new world and to develop an interest I was very happy to share with my mother. I was excited to learn some English letters and words, which were like mathematical signs to me.

During those years, I remember my father often leaving the house while my mother listened to the English radio station. I still can picture myself listening with her. To me the sound of English speaking was a kind of rhythmical music. When I entered junior high school, I really began to study English. Although my mother never said anything directly, I could tell from some hints that she expected me not to disgrace her profession. I started my English class with some dread, but I, to my delight, did very well with it. As I continued to study, however, I found I lost the pleasure of hearing enjoyable music in the English language. The only thing I had to take care of was to keep good grades. This pressure for high marks invaded the relationship between my mother and me. English was then becoming a burden for me, because I thought that English alone was the glue to connect us.

My mother realized that the Japanese educational system is very severe, strict, and competitive, and she knew that the academic background decides the way people are valued in society. That is why, like other modern Japanese parents, she hoped her children would enter a prestigious university. Without thinking of their children's feelings, my mother and her friends and colleagues compared their children as either better than or inferior to others. I studied so as not to disappoint my mother's expectation and to be superior to others in this vehement competition. I was like a racing horse. I lost myself, and my own pleasure in English, because I was driven by my purpose, but I still did not have any security. My mother began to seem not like a mother to me but like a Japanese woman with an American mask on her face. I now began to hate English.

To make things worse, my mother began talking to me more and more about my older sister, who was so smart that she learned to speak English without difficulty. As I heard my mother make more and more of these comparisons, I thought that she loved my sister more because she was the daughter my mother expected. Before I was aware, my English grades went down and my mother was very unhappy with me. She did not scold me, but no longer did we share the harmonies of the American radio programs.

One day when she turned on the radio, I was feeling very lonely. In my loneliness, I followed my father out the door as he left to take a walk. For the first time, I listened to

him talk about his thoughts about the English language. He explained that for a long time Japan was isolated from other countries and that we had to depend on ourselves. Even now, we had to preserve our culture. I saw myself as that isolated island, and I turned to my father's way of thinking. It is his belief that daughters be educated to the old ways so that when they are wives and mothers they may carry on our customs. Thinking about his view, I tried to adopt Japanese traditional cultures such as calligraphy, flower arrangement, and tea ceremonies instead of studying English. Through practicing those things, I recognized the Japanese spirit. I saw that this isolated island, my homeland, had created such a sensitive race and elegant and refined culture. My father was very delighted to teach me about it.

Now I had my father's approval, but I was still not happy. I saw that I was giving up one important part of myself—studying English—just because I was angry at the pressure my mother put on me. When I told my father I was going to study English again, I could see that he was sad. But I let him know that I was not going to forget all the Japanese culture I had learned. He said he did not see how that was possible, but still when my mother urged me to accept the chance to study in the United States, he did not try to keep me behind.

I can see now that the big gap between my mother and father is that of new ideas versus the old ones. My frustration came from trying always to think which way was best. Right now, as a Japanese woman, I see conflicts because I value my home culture, including the isolation from others; yet I also see how much modern Japan has learned from other cultures all over the world. For instance, although my father still remembers World War II and thinks of the United States as an enemy, my mother points out that behind today's Japanese prosperity, there has been American relief. Also, here I am in America where my mother often dreamed to go for study. Although I came with some reluctance, I think that this country is great. Here I find relief from the frustration I felt in Japan of having to choose between my mother's view and my father's view. From the time I was a young girl, I wanted only to please one parent or to please the other. Now, in the United States, I see young people who do what they want to do. Now I understand real liberty means not following someone else's ways. Here I can become educated and study the English language but also value my traditions. I don't have to be my mother or my father. This is my life and I am me.

Dave Harris's process as he responded to the following assignment:
After reading several of the selections from chapter 10, "Rights and Responsibilities," write an essay arguing for a right or responsibility that you believe needs our society's attention. As you develop your argument, keep in mind the audience you are trying to persuade. Make certain that whatever evidence and appeals you use (rational or emotional) will be convincing to this audience.

Before you read Dave's response to this assignment, you may want to read two or three selections from chapter 10. Especially recommended are "The Solitude of Self" (pages 385–389), "Why Blacks Need Affirmative Action" (pages 405–406), and "A Loaded Question" (pages 422–430).

Exploring Ideas: Mapping

After reading several selections from the section, Dave thought about what he saw as important rights and responsibilities. To consider his ideas, he used a strategy called

mapping (or *webbing*). This process is similar to listing (page 40) and freewriting (page 50), but it encourages a visual—rather than After spending a semester at the University of London, Dave had returned to school in the United States with a profoundly changed view of the relationship between the United States and other countries. He saw the views he had previously held—and the views he believed many of his friends still held—as cause for concern. To explore this concern and to shape it into an argument, Dave began by writing the subject that interested him—American views of other countries—in the center of the paper. After that, he identified three main categories related to this subject: (1) areas of concern, (2) problems for the United States caused by this view, and (3) solutions for the problems. Finally, he worked at seeing the issues related to each of these categories. Dave did not complete this map all at one sitting. He began with the main topic and the three subtopics; then he added a few points to each subtopic. He then put the map away, keeping his thoughts in his mind and pondering them whenever he had a few moments free (a strategy called *incubation*). After a few days had passed, he found time to sit down with his map and add several new possibilities.

Planning and Writing a Draft

As Dave looked at his map, he realized that in his paper he would try to persuade his fellow classmates that American views of other countries and their citizens are often extremely narrow and sometimes dangerously limited. To convince his audience, he knew that he would have to provide examples to show that the limited view did exist and to show that this limited view posed problems.

GATHERING EVIDENCETo evaluate his thesis, Dave took several steps. First, he wrote a survey with questions relating to knowledge of countries other than the United States and asked fifty students, all of whom were born and raised in the United States and who came from various age, ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic groups, to respond to the survey. Thirty-eight students responded; and as Dave read what they had written, he saw that the data supported his thesis.

Dave also read several issues of newspapers and newsmagazines from the preceding three years to see how the American news media reported stories relating to other countries. He noticed that in most of the stories he read, only the American point of view was given much attention or emphasis. He decided to use stories on the Gulf War as an example. Finally, Dave asked the principals of seven schools (from elementary to secondary level) if he could look at their social studies and literature textbooks. As he had expected, he found that most of the textbooks were seriously out of date and that little attention was paid to historic figures or writers who were not part of the Western cultural tradition. For instance, ancient history textbooks focused on Egypt, Greece, and Rome, with little or no mention of early Oriental, Native American, or African (other than Egyptian) civilizations.

SEEING WITH NEW EYES

When I began classes at the University of London, I expected my British classmates to be as curious about the United States as I was about England. I had so many questions about everything, from the relationship between Parliament and the royal family to the way the subway system (called “the tube”) worked. What surprised me was that most of my friends from Great Britain or other European countries knew as much, or sometimes more, about government, politics, film stars, and even sports in the United States as I did.

During the four months I lived in London, and since I have returned to the United States, I have been thinking about this observation, and I have become convinced that many of us in this country have a very limited view of the world we live in. Furthermore, I believe that this narrow view can lead to and has led to problems that we need to address.

To test my belief that many of my fellow students here in the United States shared the lack of knowledge I brought with me to England, I wrote a survey asking several questions—some of which I could not have answered when I left for my semester at the University of London. I asked fifty students who were born and raised in the United States to answer these questions; thirty-eight students responded. While I realize that thirty-eight students at one college cannot be considered conclusive evidence of a problem, I think their responses do suggest that questions need to be raised. Most of them could not name the heads of foreign governments, many were unaware of geographical data, and some retained outdated, stereotypical views of the daily lives of people who live in other countries. Again, I emphasize that these responses do not constitute conclusive proof that all or even a majority of college students lack knowledge of other countries. Certainly, however, these answers indicate the need to consider the possibility that we Americans have a narrow view of the world, to investigate where that narrow view comes from, and to understand why it might cause problems.

There are no doubt many causes for the limited view we often take of the world outside the United States. I investigated only two of them. First, I read several newspaper and newsmagazine accounts of one important event relating to the United States and some other country or countries. One event that impressed me most during the past few years was the Gulf War, so I decided to focus on that. As I read the accounts of the end of the war, I noticed one thing that seemed to me representative of the way stories about other countries are reported by the American press. Many, many of the stories looked at the suffering of American civilians, such as people whose family members had to leave their jobs because they were called up to be sent to the Gulf. On the other hand, very few of the stories told much about what was going on for Iraqi civilians.

Another cause of narrow thinking comes from what we learn in our schools. Public schools, in particular, have a problem, because in these schools books are bought with public funds, not purchased by the individual student. Limited public funding means that old books are often not replaced. I looked at the social studies texts (history, geography, and political science) in seven schools in this city. From elementary school to high school, I found the same thing. The textbooks were seriously out of date. While teachers may give supplementary information to fill in the gaps, the out-of-date textbooks remain in students' hands, giving them ideas about other countries that are now incorrect.

How can we begin to address this problem of the narrow view many Americans have of the world? By identifying two of the places where the problem originates, I have also identified where changes can begin. First, we should all be aware when reading or listening to mass media that the stories may be slanted only toward the American viewpoint. We should ask ourselves the question: How would other countries see this issue? We can also write letters to newspapers, newsmagazines, and tele-vision stations asking for more balanced coverage. On the local level, we can check textbooks and other teaching materials in public schools and lobby for the purchase of more up-to-date materials—or at least for the removal of texts that contain incorrect and misleading information. Revising: Providing Specific Details and Examples

When Dave reread his essay, he realized that although he had talked about the survey he had done, about the articles he had read in newspapers and magazines, and about his visits to local schools, he had not provided enough specific details and examples to be convincing. He then reviewed the notes he had taken as he gathered his data and rewrote the body of his essay to include the evidence the first draft lacked. Here are the revised paragraphs.

To test my belief that many of my fellow students shared the lack of knowledge I brought with me to England, I wrote a survey asking several questions—some of which I could not have answered when I left for my semester at the University of London. I asked fifty students who were born and raised in the United States to answer these questions; thirty-eight students responded. While I realize that thirty-eight students at one college cannot be considered conclusive evidence of a problem, I think their responses do suggest that questions need to be raised. Most of them could not name the heads of foreign governments, many were unaware of geographical data, and some retained outdated, stereotypical views of the daily lives of people who live in other countries. Consider, for example, these points:

1.
Only five of the thirty-eight students could name the prime minister of England.
2.
Only seven knew who Yasar Arafat was, and only one knew the name of the country he currently leads.
3.
No one knew the name of the premier of France.
4.
Only three could name more than three countries in Africa.
5.
Six answered “true” to the following statement: “Most people in Japan wear kimonos as their regular, daily form of dress.”

Again, I emphasize that these responses do not constitute conclusive proof that all or even a majority of college students lack knowledge of other countries. Certainly, however, they indicate the need to consider the possibility that we Americans have a narrow view of the world, to investigate where that narrow view comes from, and why it might cause problems.

There are no doubt many causes for the limited view we often take of the world outside the United States. I investigated only two of them. First, I read several newspaper and newsmagazine accounts of one important event relating to the United States and some other country or countries (I chose *Newsweek*, *Time*, and the *New York Times*). One event that impressed me greatly during the past few years was the Gulf War, so I decided to focus on that. As I read the accounts of the end of the war, I noticed one thing that seemed to me representative of the way stories about other countries are reported by the

American press. Many, many of the stories stressed that the loss of life was “amazingly light” (*Time*, March 23, 1991, p. 56) or that casualties were “almost miraculously low” (*New York Times*, March 27, 1991, p. 1). Of course, these stories were talking about American lives lost—not about the thousands of Iraqis (many of them civilians) who were killed. While many of us may not have much sympathy with the government of Iraq, I don’t think most Americans would just discount the deaths of thousands of people (including old people, children, and babies). Yet the media reports encouraged us not to think beyond the effects on our own lives.

Another cause of narrow thinking comes from what we learn in our schools. Public schools, in particular, have a problem, because in these schools books are bought with public funds, not purchased by the individual student. Because public funds are limited, old books are often not replaced. I looked at the social studies texts (history, geography, and political science) in seven schools in this city. From elementary school to high school, I found the same thing. The textbooks were seriously out of date. Not one book I looked at had a publication date later than 1985; many had publication dates in the early 1980s; one history text was published in 1975. That means that none of these books could contain any information about the reunification of Germany, the end of the Cold War, or the breakdown of the Soviet Union. While teachers may give supplementary information to address these problems, the out-of-date textbooks remain in students’ hands, giving them ideas about other countries that are now incorrect.

Criteria for evaluating emotional appeals cannot be defined as easily as criteria for judging rational appeals. Traditional discussions of argument and persuasion often suggest that any appeal to the emotions is somehow dishonest and suspect. Yet as humans, we make most of the decisions in our lives—including choosing the values we live by—not only from what our minds know to be true but also from what our emotions lead us to see as valid. Most of us agree that a balance between intellect and emotion is desirable; few of us would want to live in a world controlled solely by thought or solely by feelings.

The problem, then, is to recognize how a writer appeals to our feelings and to reject false manipulation while not ignoring the claims of emotions we see as genuine and worthy of our response. An example of an argument based primarily on emotional appeals is Martin Luther King, Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” (pages 245–249). While King does use rational appeals in this speech, what most of us remember most keenly are the perfectly chosen words, the effective repetition, and the moving examples of men, women, and children who have been denied their dreams. Is this use of emotional appeals valid? Each person has to decide for herself or himself. Those who disagree with King and refuse to see any reason to entertain his dream would probably argue that his appeal to emotions is not valid. Those in the audience who agree with King—or who listen with a mind open to possibilities—would almost certainly say that the plea for equality *must* be made at least in part through emotional means. For it is in one’s heart as well as in one’s mind that the commitment to such an ideal must be affirmed. In this book, persuasive essays that depend strongly on emotional appeals include “A Loaded Question” (pages 411–420) and “A Question of Language” (pages 371–374).

Appeals to the emotions are made in many ways. Consider these points as you evaluate such appeals.

1.

Word choice. Remember that words have both literal (*denotative*) and emotional (*connotative*) meanings. For instance, although *clever* and *cunning* both describe a person as skillful and talented, most people would prefer to be called clever, because *cunning* also implies a crafty slyness. As you read persuasive writing, watch carefully for the connotations of words. Decide whether the other evidence offered convinces you that the word chosen truly describes the person or situation or whether, instead, it has been used primarily to divert your attention from making a fair assessment.

2.

Figurative language. An extension of word choice is the use of figurative language. A writer or speaker may use startling or unusual metaphors or similes to gain the attention and sympathy of the audience. For example, in the “I Have a Dream” speech (pages 245–249), Martin Luther King compares the Emancipation Proclamation to “a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice.”

3.

Sentence patterns. Certain sentence patterns—for example, repetition of a key word or phrase—can fire the emotions in either a positive or a negative way. Repetition can lead, and has led, to terrifying mob violence; yet in other instances, it has inspired selfless and idealistic actions. Once again, as a responsible listener and reader, you need to be aware of the way these devices are used and decide for yourself whether you consider the argument worthy of your emotional response.

4.

Imitative language patterns. A writer or speaker may use language patterns familiar from other respected sources, thus tacitly asking the audience to give to this argument the same emotional responses that would have been given to the original source. Martin Luther King begins “I Have a Dream” with this sentence: “Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand, signed the Emancipation Proclamation.” Not only does he refer directly to President Abraham Lincoln, but also, with his opening phrase, he recalls Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address. In other places in the speech, King echoes the cadences of the King James Bible, with sentences such as “one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, . . . and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed. . . .” Through these imitative language choices, King associates his message with both a highly revered political figure and a religious doctrine. For many in his audience, these two associations arouse powerful positive responses.

Topics Worth Arguing About

If you understand both rational and emotional appeals, you are prepared to write persuasively. But you should understand that persuasion is not always an appropriate approach; some topics are not worthy of argument. Keep these guidelines in mind:

1.

Matters of fact are not worthy of argument. If you know that Ingrid Bergman and Yul Brynner won the Oscars for best actress and best actor in 1956 but your friend insists these awards went, instead, to Joanne Woodward and Alec Guinness, you can easily prove that you are right by consulting an almanac or entertainment encyclopedia. There’s

no sense wasting time and energy trying to convince someone to believe a fact that can be verified through a source you both consider accurate and reliable.

2.

Matters of taste are not worthy of argument. While you might reasonably argue that your co-worker should at least try the salad you have made of fiddlehead ferns and dandelion greens, you can't reasonably expect to persuade her that she likes the concoction. Our tastes (in food, pleasure reading, style of dressing, and so on) do change, of course, but not because someone else has given us a list of reasons to make the change.

A reasonable subject for a persuasive argument, then, is a subject that raises questions that are controversial. Usually, such a subject has many aspects. For instance, if the subject concerns the solution to a problem, ordinarily no one answer shows itself as the only correct answer. In addition, most controversial issues are extremely broad and complex. When you choose to write about them, you need to narrow your topic to suit the time and space you have to devote to writing the argument. For instance, to try to write a three- to five-page paper arguing for or against legalized abortion or capital punishment would be extremely difficult. Instead, you would narrow the topic so that you were arguing, say, about the use of tax money to pay for abortions for welfare patients or about the rights of those convicted of a capital crime to appeal their sentences.

ONE STUDENT'S PROCESS FOR PERSUASIVE WRITING

As an example of an essay that persuades, we will consider how Kimberly Waibel, the same student who wrote the informative essay (pages 50–59), continued to develop her interest in interracial adoption in response to the following assignment:

Choose a controversial issue that interests you. Do further research on the topic and then write an essay that argues for one point of view related to the controversy. You will be giving a brief oral summary of your argument in class, so your audience for this paper will be your classmates and instructor. Make certain that whatever evidence and appeals you use (rational or emotional) will be convincing to this audience.

Exploring Ideas: Mapping

Kim read several articles related to interracial adoption, a controversial issue in which she was interested. Using the ideas from these sources, Kim used a strategy called *mapping*, or *webbing*, to explore possibilities for developing the argument. This process is similar to listing (page 50) and freewriting (page 42), but it encourages a visual—rather than linear—exploration. There are no hard-and-fast rules for mapping. But usually, you start out with a general subject—perhaps a word or a phrase—in the middle of a blank sheet of paper. From there, you try to come up with several possible subdivisions of that idea, circling these new possibilities and attaching them to the original circled idea with lines. Mapping helps you to discover what you know about a topic and, in addition, serves as a rough outline for planning and writing the first draft.

Planning and Writing a Draft

Kim began her map with the broad topic “interracial adoption” and then moved to the circles indicating “points against” and “points for.” As she worked on the map, it quickly became clear that it was easier for her to find points for interracial adoption than against it. She recognized that her reading and thinking on the topic had led her to this thesis:

Interracial adoption should be considered as a valuable option for minority children without homes.

Nevertheless, she also recognized that she needed to look more closely at arguments that opposed this view and also to research sources that would support her viewpoint.

GATHERING EVIDENCETo evaluate her thesis, Kim took several steps. She used her library's online periodical index to find additional articles in several journals. She also located books on adoption, and by checking the indexes of these books she was able to find chapters or sections of chapters that addressed the topic of interracial adoption. She was careful to find material written both by people who supported interracial adoption and by those who opposed it.

CONSIDERING TONE AND VOICEAfter evaluating the data she had gathered and seeing that it did support her thesis, Kim considered her audience and how readers would respond to the tone and voice she would use as she wrote. *Tone* means the attitude of the writer toward the audience and the subject. *Voice* is closely connected with tone, because the writer's voice establishes his or her image in the reader's mind. While tone and voice are always significant considerations during the composing process, they deserve particular attention when the writer's aim is persuasion.

Most often, when you are writing to persuade, you establish a voice that encourages your readers to see you as a fair, thoughtful, and reasonable person. You avoid heated accusations, snide observations, and defensive comments, because most readers immediately raise their guard when they are addressed by a writer's voice filled with unbridled anger, bitterness, sarcasm, or bias. In addition to choosing your words carefully, you also provide as much solid evidence as possible to establish a voice that enables the reader to trust your expertise about the subject you are addressing.

The voice you convey to your audience also indicates your tone. When you take the time and effort to write in a way that establishes common ground—connections—between you and your readers, you show them that your attitude toward them is respectful rather than adversarial. You show your commitment to your subject, and to your position on that subject, by choosing language that conveys the depth of your concern and yet also shows that you are not narrow-minded and have not ignored objections that may be raised to the points you are making.

Kim realized that the students she hoped to convince were, on the whole, as sincerely concerned as she was with being fair-minded citizens of the world in which they lived. She knew she would have to take care as she wrote not to sound like someone who had become instantly wise and who was now trying to force her views on others.

Keeping these points in mind, and using the categories and subcategories from her mapping, Kim wrote the following draft:

IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CHILD

*In the 1995 film *Losing Isaiah*, a white social worker adopts a black baby who has been abandoned. Later, Isaiah's birth mother, now recovered from drug addiction, seeks to regain custody. The birth mother's lawyer makes this statement: "You might raise a black child with the best intentions in the world—colorblind. But in the end the world is still out there. He needs to know who he is" (Brant 29). In this way, the film raises the highly controversial topic of interracial adoption. In the film, the Hollywood solution is that both the adoptive mother and the birth mother work out a way to care for him together.*

However, in real life such solutions are extremely rare, and instead minority children are being denied the opportunity to become part of a family that wants them just because that

family is of a different race. It is important to examine the issues related to interracial adoption and to find a solution that will really be in the best interest of the children involved.

The controversy did not begin in the 1990s. Interracial (or transracial) adoption has been an issue of great concern since the 1950s. (The terms “interracial” and “transracial” adoption, which are interchangeable, refer to adoptions in which the child belongs to one race and the prospective parents, or one of the prospective parents, to another.) In the 1950s, prejudice against minority groups led to legal rulings making transracial adoption extremely difficult. Then, in the 1960s, the civil rights movements promoted the value of integration, and as a result, social service agencies were urged by such organizations as the Child Welfare League of America to view interracial adoption as a reasonable possibility for homeless minority children. In 1972, however, the National Association of Black Social Workers developed a statement strongly opposing the interracial adoption of minority children, and following this statement interracial adoption was barred, officially or unofficially, in forty-three states (Brant). In spite of recent legal efforts, such as the passage of the Multiethnic Placement Act of 1994, to abolish race as the key factor in an adoption, transracial adoption is still not a completely accepted practice (Brooks et al. 169).

There are many reasons why agencies are still reluctant to place minority children with white families. In an article published by the *National Black Law Journal*, Valerie Phillips Hermann describes some of these reasons. First of all, there is the view that minority children who are adopted by families from races different from their own will grow up without an understanding of their own culture and so will have identity problems. Second, there is a concern that transracially adopted children will experience more racial prejudice because of the way some white people might respond to families who adopt minority children. Third, there is a belief that minority children who grow up in white families will have difficulty being accepted into either the white culture or the black culture because of their mixed identities (Hermann).

All of these concerns lead many social service agencies to the view that transracial adoption cannot be the ideal placement and because of this it should not be seen as an equal alternative to inracial adoption. When children are placed transracially, it is often seen as a “last chance” case and, therefore, as “second best” (Simon, Alstein, *A.R.I.* 32). Such an attitude creates a situation in which adoption agencies go to extreme measures to find same-race homes for a child, causing the child to spend additional time in foster or institutional care. Ironically, the older the child gets, the more developed his or her identity is and the more difficult it can be for him or her to integrate into an adoptive family, whether from the same or a different ethnic background as the child.

All three of the major concerns expressed by opponents of interracial adoption are addressed in the twenty-year study done by sociology professors Rita James Simon and Howard Alstein. Simon and Alstein began their study in 1971, considering 143 families from Chicago, St. Louis, Minneapolis, and Ann Arbor, Michigan. A point that is highly significant comes from the early years of the study during the first contact with the adopting families. Simon and Alstein gave the adopted nonwhite children (as well as white birth children in families that had them) the Kenneth Clark “doll” test. In this test, children are shown dolls of various ethnic backgrounds and are asked to pick out which one is smarter, prettier, nicer, and so on. Simon and Alstein report:

Unlike all other previous “doll studies,” our respondents did not favor the white doll. It was not considered smarter, prettier, nicer, etc. than the black doll by either the white or black children. . . . Yet the black and white children in our study accurately identified themselves as white or black on those same tests. (*A.R.I.* 155)

As Simon and Alstein continued to follow the experiences of these families, in 1983–84, they asked the children in the study to complete a “self-esteem scale,” which was designed to show how much respect the child has for him- or herself. In giving this test, Simon and Alstein looked at scores of the following groups: black transracially adopted children, other transracially adopted children, white birth children, and white adopted children. The scores for all four groups of children were nearly the same. Simon and Alstein state, “No one group of respondents manifested higher or lower self-esteem than the others” (*A.R.I.* 234).

Finally, in 1991, during the final phase of the study, Simon and Alstein polled black transracially adopted young adults from the 93 families still participating. Of these individuals, 80 percent disagreed with the view of the National Association of Black Social Workers, which strongly opposes transracial adoption. In addition, these young adults made comments such as these:

I feel lucky to have been adopted when I was very young [24 days]. I was brought up to be self-confident—to be the best I can. I was raised in an honest environment.

Multicultural attitudes develop better children. I was brought up without prejudice. The experience is fulfilling and enriching for parents and children. (Simon 81)

In response to the claim that the general public would be prejudiced against transracial adoption, we can look at a survey carried out by the television program “CBS This Morning,” which polled 975 adults. They asked the question “Should race be a factor in adoption?” Seventy percent of white Americans said “no,” and 71 percent of black Americans said “no.”

Considering the results of the Simon and Alstein study as well as the results of the CBS poll should certainly lead us to think carefully about the benefits of transracial adoption. Social workers need to stop looking at transracial adoption as a second-rate alternative and start treating it as an equally valuable alternative to inracial adoption. With the passage of the Multiethnic Placement Act in 1994, a step was taken in the right direction. Now the government and the media, as well as the general public, need to continue to promote finding the best home possible for children, without using racial concerns as a barrier.

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Revising: Developing Transitions, Providing Examples, Expanding Explanations
When Kim reread her essay, she realized that certain aspects required revision. Among the changes she made were these:

1.

Develop transitions: Make the connection between the first and second paragraph clearer.

2.

Provide examples: The examples to refute the arguments against transracial adoption come mainly from the work of Simon and Alstein; find another study that also refutes those points.

3.

Expand explanations: The Multiethnic Placement Act is mentioned in both the first and the second paragraph; give more explanation.

To address the first revision issue, Kim wrote the following sentence to replace the first sentence in the second paragraph of her draft:

To fully understand the controversy, it is important to examine its history and development.

To address the second revision issue, Kim did additional research and found another study supporting transracial adoption. She added this paragraph just before the next to last paragraph in her draft and also added the citation shown after this paragraph to her "Works Cited" list.

In addition to the extensive studies of Simon and Alstein, several other studies support the idea that interracial adoption is not harmful to children. One of the studies most often cited was carried out by William Feigelman and Arnold R. Silverman of Nassau Community College. They found that "[transracially adopted] children's adjustments were generally similar to those of inracially adopted children" (602).

Feigelman, William, and Arnold R. Silverman. "The Long-Term Effects of Transracial Adoption." *Social Service Review* 68 (1994): 588–609.

To address the third revision issue, Kim added the following explanation just before the last sentence of the final paragraph.

This bill, which was supported by both Republicans and Democrats, now makes it illegal to use race to delay or deny adoption placements. However, this bill does not make clear the extent to which race may still be considered before being in violation of the provisions of the bill. Therefore, the government and the media

Revised Argument Paper

Here is the revised version of Kimberly's argument paper:

IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CHILD

In the 1995 film Losing Isaiah, a white social worker adopts a black baby who has been abandoned. Later, Isaiah's birth mother, now recovered from drug addiction, seeks to regain custody. The birth mother's lawyer makes this statement: "You might raise a black child with the best intentions in the world—colorblind. But in the end the world is still out there. He needs to know who he is" (Brant 29). In this way, the film raises the highly

controversial topic of interracial adoption. In the film, the Hollywood solution is that both the adoptive mother and the birth mother work out a way to care for him together. However, in real life such solutions are extremely rare, and instead minority children are being denied the opportunity to become part of a family that wants them just because that family is of a different race. It is important to examine the issues related to interracial adoption and to find a solution that will really be in the best interest of the children involved.

To fully understand the controversy, it is important to examine its history and development. Interracial (or transracial) adoption has been an issue of great concern since the 1950s. (The terms “interracial” and “transracial” adoption, which are interchangeable, refer to adoptions in which the child belongs to one race and the prospective parents, or one of the prospective parents, to another.) In the 1950s, prejudice against minority groups led to legal rulings making transracial adoption extremely difficult. Then in the 1960s, the civil rights movements promoted the value of integration, and as a result, social service agencies were urged by such organizations as the Child Welfare League of America to view interracial adoption as a reasonable possibility for homeless minority children. In 1972, however, the National Association of Black Social Workers developed a statement strongly opposing the interracial adoption of minority children, and following this statement interracial adoption was barred, officially or unofficially, in forty-three states (Brant). In spite of recent legal efforts, such as the passage of the Multiethnic Placement Act of 1994, to abolish race as the key factor in an adoption, transracial adoption is still not a completely accepted practice (Brooks et al. 169).

There are many reasons why agencies are still reluctant to place minority children with white families. In an article published by the *National Black Law Journal*, Valerie Phillips Hermann describes some of these reasons. First of all, there is the view that minority children who are adopted by families from races different from their own will grow up without an understanding of their own culture and so will have identity problems. Second, there is a concern that transracially adopted children will experience more racial prejudice because of the way some white people might respond to families who adopt minority children. Third, there is a belief that minority children who grow up in white families will have difficulty being accepted into either the white culture or the black culture because of their mixed identities (Hermann).

All of these concerns lead many social service agencies to the view that transracial adoption cannot be the ideal placement and because of this it should not be seen as an equal alternative to inracial adoption. When children are placed transracially, it is often seen as a “last chance” case and, therefore, as “second best” (Simon, Alstein, *A.R.I.* 32). Such an attitude creates a situation in which adoption agencies go to extreme measures to find same-race homes for a child, causing the child to spend additional time in foster or institutional care. Ironically, the older the child gets, the more developed his or her identity is and the more difficult it can be for him or her to integrate into an adoptive family, whether from the same or a different ethnic background as the child.

All three of the major concerns expressed by opponents of interracial adoption are addressed in the twenty-year study done by sociology professors Rita James Simon and Howard Alstein. Simon and Alstein began their study in 1971, considering 143 families from Chicago, St. Louis, Minneapolis, and Ann Arbor, Michigan. A point that is highly significant comes from the early years of the study during the first contact with the

adopting families. Simon and Alstein gave the adopted nonwhite children (as well as white birth children in families that had them) the Kenneth Clark “doll” test. In this test, children are shown dolls of various ethnic backgrounds and are asked to pick out which one is smarter, prettier, nicer and so on. Simon and Alstein report:

Unlike all other previous “doll studies,” our respondents did not favor the white doll. It was not considered smarter, prettier, nicer, etc. than the black doll by either the white or black children. . . . Yet the black and white children in our study accurately identified themselves as white or black on those same tests. (*A.R.I.* 155)

As Simon and Alstein continued to follow the experiences of these families, in 1983–84, they asked the children in the study to complete a “self-esteem scale,” which was designed to show how much respect the child has for him- or herself. In giving this test, Simon and Alstein looked at scores of the following groups: black transracially adopted children, other transracially adopted children, white birth children, and white adopted children. The scores for all four groups of children were nearly the same. Simon and Alstein state, “No one group of respondents manifested higher or lower self-esteem than the others” (*A.R.I.* 234).

Finally, in 1991, during the final phase of the study, Simon and Alstein polled black transracially adopted young adults from the 93 families still participating. Of these individuals, 80 percent disagreed with the view of the National Association of Black Social Workers, which strongly opposes transracial adoption. In addition, these young adults made comments such as these:

I feel lucky to have been adopted when I was very young [24 days]. I was brought up to be self-confident—to be the best I can. I was raised in an honest environment.

Multicultural attitudes develop better children. I was brought up without prejudice. The experience is fulfilling and enriching for parents and children. (Simon 81)

In addition to the extensive studies of Simon and Alstein, several other studies support the idea that interracial adoption is not harmful to children. One of the studies most often cited was carried out by William Feigelman and Arnold R. Silverman of Nassau Community College. They found that “[transracially adopted] children’s adjustments were generally similar to those of inracially adopted children” (602).

In response to the claim that the general public would be prejudiced against transracial adoption, we can look at a survey carried out by the television program “CBS This Morning,” which polled 975 adults. They asked the question “Should race be a factor in adoption?” Seventy percent of white Americans said “no,” and 71 percent of black Americans said “no.”

Considering the results of the Simon and Alstein study as well as the results of the CBS poll should certainly lead us to think carefully about the benefits of transracial adoption. Social workers need to stop looking at transracial adoption as a second-rate alternative and start treating it as an equally valuable alternative to inracial adoption. With the passage of the Multiethnic Placement Act in 1994, a step was taken in the right direction. This bill, which was supported by both Republicans and Democrats, now makes it illegal

to use race to delay or deny adoption placements. However, this bill does not make clear the extent to which race may still be considered before being in violation of the provisions of the bill. Therefore, the government and the media, as well as the general public, need to continue to promote finding the best home possible for children, without using racial concerns as a barrier.

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Suggestions for Persuasive Writing

1.

Determine the main idea you will argue for or against. For example, you might try to persuade readers to question a previously accepted point of view. You might try to convince your audience to accept a proposal for solving a problem. Or you might challenge a law or rule you see as unjust.

2.

Gather data related to your main idea. Make certain that you have enough evidence to support your idea before you begin to write. Remember that as you gather evidence you may change your mind and see that you cannot, in fact, support the idea you began with. Then you will have to begin again with a revised thesis idea.

3.

Evaluate your audience carefully, and then consider the voice and tone you will use.

4.

Consider points that might be made against your argument, and plan ways to address these points.

5.

Plan and write your draft(s) so that the evidence you offer moves smoothly and logically from one point to the next.

6.

Revise your draft(s), paying particular attention to the evidence you have offered and your use of rational and emotional appeals.

7.

Consider your word choice, making certain you have established a convincing, reasonable, and reliable voice.

8.

Evaluate your conclusion to make sure that it does more than summarize what you have already said. For example, you might provide a solution for a problem or suggest related issues worthy of further exploration.

