



Uncontained

Fall 2019 Educators' Guide



EDUCATORS' GUIDE

Fall 2019 | UNCONTAINED

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Fall 2019 edition of the *Asymptote* Educators' Guide!

With each new issue, we aim to support educators who want to integrate *Asymptote* content into their classrooms. We hope that *Asymptote*'s educational materials find their way into a wide range of classrooms and contexts, across regions and disciplines, and so we have tried to design a flexible resource that can supplement various learning environments. This guide includes five different lessons of varying lengths, covering curriculum from middle school students to college and university-level students. Each section contains suggestions for complementary activities that can be used in conjunction with each other to form complete lesson plans, or separately to complement your lessons on other content.

The lesson plans in this Educators' Guide are based on translations published in our Fall 2019 issue, "Uncontained" [available for free at <https://www.asymptotejournal.com/oct-2019>]. For this Educators' Guide, the educational team has considered research that suggests that learning is more effective and sustained when students connect new material to what they already know. In this spirit, the lesson plans presented here invite students to connect material from *Asymptote*'s Fall 2019 issue with their own knowledge and experience. Silvia Molloy's essay "Living Between Languages" illuminates how language shapes her emotional and intellectual life. The first lesson plan has students reflect both on Molloy's and their own experience with linguistic diversity. Students are also invited to consider Portunhol, a hybrid of Portuguese and Spanish, in the context of their own experience of borders and a reading of Fabián Severo's poems in the second lesson plan. The third lesson plan in this Guide is based on Yang Dian's microfiction in the special feature of *Asymptote*. Students consider the use of realism in fiction and write their own short pieces based on current news. Kalina Maleska's short story "The Master of the Mahala" speaks to how social interactions happen within a larger societal framework. Students use paraphrase and summary to situate the closeness of tragedy and humor both in the story and in their own experience. Lastly, an excerpt from Thomas Boberg's book *Africana* has students question ideas of Africa and its connection to the world at large.

We realize that the age ranges and instructional contexts for each lesson vary, and so we encourage educators to adjust these lessons to meet their needs, and to record these modifications. Your classroom and teaching experience is valuable to us, and hearing it helps us improve our formation of the next guide. Please leave feedback and suggestions here.

Finally, if you like what we do and want to get involved, we would love to hear more from you! We are currently seeking contributors willing to share thoughts and experiences about teaching world literature through the Asymptote blog (<http://asymptotejournal.com/blog>). We'd especially love to read and share your anecdotes from the lessons you teach based on this guide, or using other *Asymptote* content. Let your stories inspire others! *Asymptote for Educators* is interested in publishing student work as well. If your students have produced excellent responses to the assignments offered in this guide, other work to do with Asymptote content, or want to participate in the global conversation about translated literature as it relates to them, we are currently accepting submissions.

If you're interested in contributing, collaborating, or if you'd like to give us additional feedback, please contact us at education@asymptotejournal.com.

LIVING BETWEEN LANGUAGES by Silvia Molloy

This lesson plan has students engage with Silvia Molloy's essay "Living Between Languages." Molloy's text speaks to the experience of living and thinking in multiple languages and the subtle complexities emerging from her composing a practical and intellectual life with and between these languages.

Living Between Languages by Sylvia Molloy

<https://www.asymptotejournal.com/nonfiction/sylvia-molloy-living-between-languages/>

Learning Objectives

At the end of this unit, students will be able to

- Identify key concepts related to the topic of bilingualism
- Read and summarize the text
- Articulate ideas clearly and critically in both speaking and writing
- Develop the ability to make connections between known and new information

Assessment

Concept map on the topic of bilingualism

Written and oral summaries of the article

Participation in small group discussion

Written reflection

Approximate Grade Level

University students

Materials Needed

Living Between Languages

Chalkboard or whiteboard

Colored pens

Approximate Length

Lesson One (25 minutes) and Lessons Two & Three (90 minutes total)

Lesson One: Introduction

Concept Map (10 minutes): Introduce the topic of bilingualism and have students create a concept map. (If students are unfamiliar with how to make a concept map, explain and give an example first.) Questions that might help students generate ideas:

- Do you, your family members, or friends speak more than one language?

- What effects might speaking more than one language have on an individual, family, or community?
- What other things come to mind when you hear the words bilingual or bilingualism?

Discussion (10 minutes): Have students pair up to discuss their concept maps. What concepts have you included on your map? Where have you learned this information about bilingualism (personal experience, media, school, etc.)?

Assign Homework (5 minutes): Introduce the reading selection, *Living Between Languages*, a nonfiction piece written in and translated from Spanish by Sylvia Molloy.

Distribute the text *Living Between Languages*. For homework, students should write a one- to two-sentence summary of each section of the article and one discussion question based on the reading. Students should bring their concept map, article, and homework to the next lesson.

Lesson Two:

Article Review (45 minutes): Check homework completion and student comprehension of the article by reviewing the summaries. Create seven groups and have each group focus on one section of the article: *Family Romance*, *Territory*, *Punctum*, *Animal Talk*, *Speaking From Different Places*, *Lapsus*, *The Writing Lesson*. The group members should share their summaries and use these as a base for creating the group's summary.

A representative from each group presents the group's summary. The teacher then leads a whole-class discussion to guide students' understanding of the relationship between the section contents and titles. Clarify the meaning of unfamiliar words, as needed.

***Territory*:** a sphere of action or thought

***Punctum*:** "Denoting the wounding, personally touching detail which establishes a direct relationship with the object or person within it." [Barthes]; "There is (rather, one chooses) a point of support, and from that point one establishes a relation with the other language as absence, or rather as shadow, the object of linguistic desire." [Molloy]

***Lapsus*:** a slip of the tongue

After reviewing the article, students add ideas from the article to their concept maps. They should use a different colored pen, if possible.

Lesson Three:

Small Group Discussion (30 minutes): Assign students to different small groups to discuss the following discussion questions. After groups have finished discussing, ask a few students to share their ideas and open up the discussion to the whole class.

1. According to the piece, how does bilingualism affect Molloy as an individual? What effects does bilingualism have on her family, school, or society?
2. Why do you think Molloy chose to title this piece “Living Between Languages”?
3. According to the author, are there differences in becoming proficient in spoken and written language? What do you think?
4. What can be inferred about the perceived prestige or stigma of English, Spanish, and French?
5. What do you think about the idea that the author and translator are the same person? Why do you think Molloy chose to leave some words and phrases in Spanish, French, or Latin in the English translation? Are some words untranslatable?
6. Are there any similarities or differences between the author’s descriptions of living between languages and your experiences with bilingualism or the attitudes about it in your region or country?
7. Can you think of additional questions?

Concept Maps (10 minutes): Students should add ideas from the discussion to their concept maps, using a different colored pen. Have students think about their maps and identify their answers to the following questions, which may help them identify possible topics for their writing assignment homework.

1. What are the most significant connections between the concepts on your map?
2. Which aspect(s) of this topic do you find most interesting or surprising?
3. Is there anything about this topic that you would like to research further?

Assign Homework (5 minutes):

Depending on the aims of the course, choose one of the following writing assignments for homework. Students should submit the writing assignment and concept map. In the assignment, students should connect previous knowledge with the reading and in-class discussion.

- Write a one-page reflection: How has your understanding of bilingualism changed or developed? Explain the connections you have made, using specific examples from your concept map and the article.
- Research one specific aspect of bilingualism and write a report of your findings. How does your research inform or change your understanding of the topic?

- Write a piece in a similar style to Molloy’s to describe your own experiences “Living Between Languages.”

Note:

This lesson uses concept maps. A brief explanation and examples can be found at <https://ctl.byu.edu/tip/concept-mapping>

NIGHT IN THE NORTH by Fabián Severo

The preceding lesson plan asked students to reflect on Silvia Molloy's experience with living between several languages. *Portunhol*, a hybrid of Portuguese and Spanish, embodies this experience in a different way as its speakers communicate both with and between two languages, thus transcending linguistic borders. Severo's poems thematize this experience in a playful manner. This lesson plan uses the poems to facilitate a reflection on borders, both in students' personal experience and in a wider geographic context.

Night in the North by Fabián Severo

<https://www.asymptotejournal.com/poetry/fabian-severo-night-in-the-north/>

Learning Objectives

At the end of this unit, students will be able to

- Define, identify, and analyze the role of borders in the world and their local communities
- Relate the concept of borders to the texts
- Determine how literary devices are used to explore themes

Assessment

Writing assignment

Approximate Grade Level

High school or university students

Materials Needed

Copies of *Night in the North* and the translator's note

Chalkboard or whiteboard

Map of South America

Approximate Length

90 minutes

Warm-up (20 minutes)

Students should write a brief answer to the following questions and then discuss the answers as a class:

- What is the definition of the word "border"?
- Can you give an example of a famous border in the world?
- Why do we have borders?

Have students think about borders in their local area. (For this activity, their local area could be defined as their school, neighborhood, or city.) The teacher may want to give an example to help students get started. After some initial thinking time, have students discuss the following questions with a partner:

- What borders are there in your local area?
- How do you know where these borders are located (i.e., physical divider, line on a map, sign, geological feature)?
- How do these borders divide or define the area? Is there a transition area near the border?
- What are the benefits of these borders? The problems?
- How do you think borders might affect the identity of the people who live near them?

Introduction (20 minutes)

In this lesson, students will read poems originally written in Portunhol, a language spoken in South America. Ask students to identify the countries and official languages spoken in South America, for example Spanish in Uruguay and Portuguese in Brazil. A map of South America can be found here:

<https://conceptdraw.com/a1246c3/preview>

Ask students: Have you heard of the language Portunhol? Where do you think it is spoken? Why do you think so?

Were students' initial guesses about Portunhol correct or incorrect? Although on the map, the borders between the countries and the languages are clear, in reality, the relationship between people, borders, language, and culture is complex. There are transition areas, and a wide variety of languages are spoken in South America. In fact, Portunhol (or Portuñol, in the Spanish spelling) is a hybrid of Portuguese and Spanish, similar to Spanglish or Franglish. It can be seen as a regional phenomenon, much like the mixture of Gaúcho dialect spoken along Brazil's southern border with Uruguay. It can also imply intentional code-switching among people who are fluent in both languages. Or it can just happen by accident because someone who is learning Portuguese substitutes Spanish words and grammar, or vice versa." <http://hackingportuguese.com/2012/02/habla-portunol-fala-portunhol/>)

Distribute and read the translator's note:

Fabián Severo is a Uruguayan poet, born in 1981. Severo is from Artigas, the largest Uruguayan town on the border and he writes in Portunhol, the language of the Uruguayan frontier with Brazil. Writing in Portunhol is a literary and political movement that exists on both sides of the frontiers of Spanish-speaking countries and Brazil but for Severo, the decision to write in Portunhol is a deliberate, provocative, and unusual choice. He is the only Uruguayan writer doing so. He does it to establish the validity of his culture and native language in a country where, until recently, the government put up billboards on the border that said, "Parents: Speak to Your Children in Spanish!" This theme of a dominant culture and language pressing down on people who live on the border is one of the many ways Severo's work echoes the issues of assimilation on the U.S. border with Mexico, or wherever

in the United States an immigrant culture rubs up against the "official" English language.

To follow up, ask students: How has living in a border region affected Severo's writing?

Reading (40 minutes)

Distribute the poems. Begin with the poem *Ten*. The teacher reads the poem aloud once to the class. In partners, students read the poem again to each other and then discuss the following questions:

- In the poem, "language" is personified and it performs human-like actions. What three actions does "this language" do?
- What kind of person do these actions suggest?
- Why do you think Severo chose to portray his language in this way?

Read the poems *Eleven* and *Nineteen*. The teacher reads the poems aloud once to the class. In partners, students read the poem again to each other and discuss the following questions:

- What do you notice about these poems?
- What significance do you think the river has?
- In the poem, what differences are there between the water and the earth? Why do you think Severo uses this contrast in the poem?

Read the poem *Fifty-eight* following the same procedure and then discuss the following questions:

- What is significant about Luisito, Silvana, and Manuel? Who has changed? Who is the same? What is the relationship between money and memory?
- How is writing in Portunhol a political act? What effect does the use of Portunhol in the poem have?
- How is this poem similar or different to the other poems by the same author?

Assign Homework (5 minutes)

Choose one of the following topics and write a paragraph-length response. In your answer, relate information from the translator's note, the poems, and your own ideas and experiences.

- What do these poems suggest about maps and borders? How do you think living in this or other border areas affects the culture, language, and identity of the people who live there?
- Can you think of other border areas where languages or cultures come into contact? What are the benefits or problems with this contact? Are these similar or different to the ones referred to in the poems?
- How does Severo use literary devices in these poems to explore the themes of language, border, and identity?

From A CONTRARIAN'S TALES by Yang Dian

The three small texts by Yang Dian provide a springboard for a discussion of realism in fiction. In addition, student groups are invited to compare and contrast two of these stories both in terms of structure and in terms of content. A creative writing assignment concludes the learning unit.

A Contrarian's Tales by Yang Dian

<https://www.asymptotejournal.com/special-feature/9-short-stories/>

Learning Objectives

At the end of this unit, students will be able to

- Discuss the use of realism in fiction
- Analyze structure of three microfictions by Yang Dian
- Identify elements of structure and content in these three microfictions
- Create a microfiction that contains two sentences from a news story

Assessment

Venn diagram (comparison)

Written microfiction (first draft and revision)

Approximate Grade Level

Middle school and high school students

Approximate Length

60 minutes

Materials Needed

Text "from *A Contrarian's Tales*"

Translator's note

Whiteboard and markers

Printed [diagrams for comparison](#)

Introduction (15 minutes)

Ask students to think about texts that are realistic and less realistic.

Writing Reflection (5 minutes)

Students write for 3 to five minutes about realism in stories they know or have read. Tell students that you will collect their notes at the end of class.

You may offer the following guiding questions:

- What do we mean by realistic?
- What kinds of stories have you read that are realistic? Where?
- Have you ever read a story or book that was not realistic?

- Which kind of story do you like better and why?
- What are some examples of kinds of stories that are never realistic?

Students get together in pairs and share their insights. They may add to their initial notes.

Class Discussion (10 minutes)

Elicit *fantasy fiction, fairy tales, fables, science fiction* as examples of stories or texts that are not realistic.

Questions for class discussion:

- What is the effect of a departure of realism in a story?
- Why might anyone be interested in reading such a story?
- Why might a writer be interested in writing a story that does not depict realistic events or characters?

Note:

Departure from realism in stories such as fables often serves an instructional purpose. In other cases, the writer may be prohibited from directly portraying reality as he or she sees it due to censorship.

Reading (30 minutes)

Read each story to the students. After each story, ask them to write down two things that they found interesting about each of the stories.

Notes on the stories:

“Folding Bed”

- “Myasthenia” is a condition causing abnormal weakness of certain muscles.

“Nyctambulis Exorrhiza”

- “Exorrhiza” is a species of palm tree in South America believed to be capable of moving toward sunlight. It is also referred to as a “walking palm.”
- “Nyctambulis” most likely refers to sleepwalking and may be a variation of the term “noctambulism,” which refers to sleepwalking.

“Revolving Door”

- The “French Concession” is an area ruled by French law, as opposed to the law of the Republic of China, which surrounds it.

Reading (20 minutes)

Give students copies of the stories and ask them to reread the stories. Students should add to their notes from the introductory activity.

Guiding questions:

- Have you read anything like these texts before? If yes, what were these texts?
- Which text do you like best? Why?
- How is your favorite text realistic? When and how is it not?

Compare and Contrast (15 minutes)

Ask students to get together in groups of three (or in pairs) to compare two of the stories using a compare-and-contrast Venn diagram. (See “Materials” above.)

Note:

Depending on how much time you have, student groups may choose the stories they want to work with, or you may assign pairs of stories (“Folding Bed” and “Nyctambulis Exorrhiza”; or “Revolving Door” and “Folding Bed”).

Optional:

Hand out the translator’s note (for high school students) and read it to students.

Question:

Two of these micro-fictions mention people disappearing. Given that the author lives in China, how might this be significant?

Assign homework (5 minutes)

Find a news story and write a microfiction (75-120 words) that uses two sentences from the news story. The idea is to use a quotidian event or fact and turn it into something that is more interesting by “imbu[ing] the bizarre, disarming, otherworldly and grotesque with just enough of a taste of reality that the reader can readily populate with their imagination whatever time, place or situation that the stories describe” [from the translator’s note].

Note:

Ideally, students get to peer edit and revise their micro-fictions either in class or as a homework assignment. The Venn diagrams and both drafts of their microfiction piece form the basis of assessment.

The lesson could be expanded by having students produce a booklet or website featuring their microfictions.

THE MASTER OF THE MAHALA by Kalina Maleska

In this lesson, students analyze a short story by Kalina Maleska by creating paraphrases and summaries to identify sources of humor and absurdity.

The Master of the Mahala by Kalina Maleska

<https://www.asymptotejournal.com/fiction/kalina-maleska-the-master-of-the-mahala/>

Learning Objectives

At the end of this unit, students will be able to

- Identify the difference between paraphrase and a summary of a text
- Recognize plot structure and components of narrative
- Critical reflect on the nature of humor and tragedy
- Reflect on how cultural difference affects perception of humor and/or tragedy

Assessment

Discussion of paraphrases and plot summaries of text

Writing assignment

Approximate Grade Level

Middle school, high school or university students

Materials Needed

Copies of “The Master of the Mahala”

Chalkboard or whiteboard

Approximate Length

45-60 minutes

Pre-activity Homework

Students are to read “Master of the Mahala” and write both a summary and a paraphrase of the story. Note that a summary is 1-2 sentences explaining the main idea, whereas a paraphrase is a more detailed restatement that will include the various points. So, where the summary will say, “This is a story about _____,” the paraphrase will describe what happens and its relevance to the overall plot.

Class Discussion (5-10 minutes)

Begin the in-class lesson by asking students to share their general impressions of the story. Did they like it? Was it strange? Surprising? Ask for a show of hands to see how many people found the story funny. Ask whether they thought it had a happy ending, and why they thought so.

Summary vs. Paraphrase Activity (20-25 minutes)

Use the students' paraphrases to collectively create a timeline of the story on the board, mapping out the sequence of events. Then, ask students to share their summaries. Write these on the board, using different colors for each. Note which parts of the plot timeline the summaries draw on. Do they seem to focus on specific moments or scenes as particularly crucial? Circle or underline those moments in the same color as the summary. Discuss the differences between the students' summaries. Note how the same scene can appear in various and how certain scenes seem more important than others.

Discussion of Humor and Tragedy (10-15 minutes)

Return to the question of humor and tragedy. Ask students to identify which moments on the timeline are funny or tragic, and label them as such. Ask students *when* the story becomes humorous or tragic, and mark their answers on the timeline.

You may offer the following guiding questions:

- Does the story switch from being humorous to being tragic at various points?
- Do any switches affect your interpretation of later events?
- Were there moments that initially seemed tragic or funny, but, upon re-reading, seem like the opposite?
- Note the increasingly absurd quality of events described—how does that factor in?
- When does the story become so absurd as to be outlandish?

Note:

The students will probably have different answers, so note this on the timeline as well.

Next, ask the students to decide whether the story as a whole is funny or tragic. Invite them to return to the text and identify the specific sentences that make it funny or tragic. Ask how they can tell when a specific sentence is humorous or tragic. Discuss their answers, noting different perspectives. Ask them why they think there are so many different answers among their classmates. Ask them to define humor and tragedy.

Cultural Differences Discussion (5-10 minutes)

Returning to the opening discussion, ask the students whether the world in which this story is set seems familiar or strange.

You may offer the following guiding questions:

- What kind of cultural milieu is this?
- Note the absurdity and exaggerated quality of these events—how reliably can you gauge what this culture is like?
- Reconnect to the question of humor and tragedy—how does the examination

of cultural difference shape your sense of whether or not this story is meant to be funny?

Assign Homework (5 minutes)

Write an argument for whether the story is tragic or humorous.

THE CONTAINER by Thomas Boberg

The lesson plan consists primarily of a guided reading activity and an informal response paper. Boberg's text contains a number of statements on Africa, on the Gambia, and, to a lesser extent, on Denmark, Boberg's home country. The text describes the unloading of a cargo container that has been shipped from Denmark to the Gambia. Additional information on the Gambia is interspersed throughout the text. Economic inequality, patterns of consumption, and the relevance of Africa in the world today are important themes.

The Container by Thomas Boberg

<https://www.asymptotejournal.com/nonfiction/the-container/>

Background information

The Gambia is a small country in West Africa. Stretching 450 km along the Gambia River, its 10,689 sq. km area is surrounded by Senegal, except for a 60 km Atlantic Ocean front. The country has a population of 2.1 million. With 176 people per square kilometer, it is one of the most densely populated countries in Africa. Most of the population (57 percent) is concentrated around urban and peri-urban centers. (Source: [The World Bank](#))

Note:

The Gambia is also referred to as "The Republic of Gambia."

A map of the Gambia within the continent of Africa can be found [here](#).

Introduction for the Instructor

From the author's biographical note:

Thomas Boberg is the author of more than thirty published books including collections of poetry, a volume of short fiction, and several volumes of travel memoirs. He has lived in Barcelona, Spain, and Lima, Peru, and spent a total of eighteen years outside Denmark.

From the translator's note:

In this excerpt, [the narrator] describes the unloading of a shipping container at the harbor in Banjul, the Gambia, that contains used goods brought to the country for resale by Dodou, a Gambian who is [the narrator's] neighbor back in Copenhagen's Nordvest (Northwest) quarter and earns a livelihood in this way.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this unit, students will be able to

- List a number of reasons why Africa is important
- Identify the Gambia on a map
- Understand how economic figures are used to describe a country
- Read and construct a concept map

Approximate Grade Level

Rising middle school students or high school students

Materials needed

Whiteboard or chalkboard

Markers or chalk

Handouts (printable documents are available [here](#))

- [Reading Questions](#)
- Concept map
- Information above (in whatever format that seems appropriate)

Approximate Length

65 minutes *or* 20 minutes with additional time outside of class for reading and post-reading activity

Introduction (15 minutes)

Activate prior knowledge and beliefs through a Think-Pair-Share activity based on the question, “What do you know about or associate with Africa?”

Students write for 3-5 minutes in their notebooks, then share with a partner.

Initiate a whole-class discussion, capturing results on the board, Take a picture for later reference.

Note:

Record all ideas the students offer about Africa, even if they are clichéd. This is not about establishing a truth or facts but to have students verbalize their knowledge and beliefs about Africa.

Establish the following facts:

- Africa is a continent, the second largest after Asia
- There are 54 countries in Africa
- The Gambia is a small country on Africa’s west coast, bounded on all sides by Senegal.

Pre-reading (5 minutes)

Explain to students that the text is an excerpt from a book, *Africana*, by the Danish author Thomas Boberg. Boberg describes the book as a “travel novel,” but it contains a multitude of observations from the author’s travels in Africa and could therefore be classified as work of creative nonfiction.

Reading (30 minutes or assign as homework)

You may offer the following guiding questions for students to consider while reading:

The Attic: At the beginning of the text (in the second paragraph), the narrator calls the container a “big mobile attic” and states that he has “a feeling that this place, this container, the activity out there, is a key to an understanding of the Gambia, of West Africa, of the whole continent and therefore of the world.”

- What do you think of this statement?
- Do houses in your country have attics?
- What are they typically used for?
- What kind of “understanding” do you think the contents of an attic could provide?
- What kind of understanding could the contents of this container provide?

The Importance of Africa: In the second paragraph, Boberg states that “right now Africa is the most important place in the world.”

- What evidence does he provide to support this statement? What do you think about this statement?

Labor: Later, the narrator describes the workers helping with the unloading of the container: “A team of day laborers stand by; every morning they wait to be pointed out: you and you and you and you.”

- What do you learn from this description about the labor market in the Gambia?
- What is Dodou’s position here? What do you think about his statement that he “packed the entire container by [him]self...”?

The Contents of the Container: The narrator states, “Dodou has bought one hundred thousand kroner worth of junk -- or what we in Denmark would call junk.” The words “junk” and “trash” appear repeatedly in this text.

- Do you think these items are junk? Do Gambians think so?
- What can you infer about Denmark from this statement? About the narrator?
- What offers additional evidence for that statement?

For advanced students: The writer also states that “[b]y writing, I’m creating a key that may or may not work, for who knows whether it will fit the hole in the door and get us into the room?”

- What does he mean by this statement?

Economics: In the paragraph beginning “Now it’s time for the tug-of-war...” the narrator contrasts wealthy countries with Africa. Pick three contrasts he points out.

- What do you think about this?
- Does it surprise you?

For advanced students:

- How does the author talk about Africa in this paragraph?
- What point is he making and how does he go about it?

The Big Picture:

- After reading this text, what is your takeaway?
- What additional questions do you have?

Note:

A document with these questions is available in this [Reading Questions](#) [handout](#).

Note:

It may be advisable to break up the text for less advanced students, or for students who have trouble concentrating on a longer text.

Reading (30 minutes or assign as homework)

Students read the text as a whole and work in pairs to explore the questions in the [handout](#).

Post-reading Activity (15 minutes)

Students discuss their impressions and answers to the questionnaire in small groups. Together they create a concept map on a large piece of paper that captures the information gathered from the text.

Note:

The [handout](#) with concept map is copied in the next page.



Concept Map
Thomas Boberg "The Container"
Asymptote, Fall 2019

Wrap-up (5 minutes)

Students add to their notes from the beginning of class. This is an opportunity to consider the results of the brainstorming in the warm-up activity.

The “I used to think..., but now I think...” thinking routine is a good structure to facilitate this reflection and allow students to track their learning. More information on this routine is available [here](#).

You may ask the students to hand in their notes or allow them to take their notes home to use with their homework.

Assign Homework (5 minutes)

Ask students to write an informal response paper (1,500 words) addressing one of the reading questions.

Alternatively, you can ask advanced students to write a 1,500-2,000-word paper explaining how Boberg’s piece does and does not confirm stereotypes about Africa. (See [this piece from the magazine *Granta*](#): “How To Write About Africa” by Binyavanga Wainaina for further details.)

Additional Resources:

- National Geographic Blog: [Getting to Know Africa: 50 Interesting Facts...](#)
- [“How to Write About Africa”](#) Binyavanga Wainaina
- This lesson uses concept maps. A brief explanation and examples can be found [here](#).

FEEDBACK

Thanks for taking the time to read our Fall 2019 Educators' Guide. We hope you found it useful and engaging. Have questions, comments, critiques, or testimonials?

Please leave your feedback at <http://tinyurl.com/asymptoteforedu>. We look forward to hearing from you!

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