

American Literature  
A Place at the Table  
Viewing Guide

Directions: Choose one of the following and write a one-page essay discussing the video A Place at the Table.

1. Write a short review of the film A Place at the Table. Summarize the theme, describe the segments or images that interested you most, and analyze why those segments were effective. Rate the film on a scale of 1 to 4 "stars," and give reasons for your rating.
2. If you had to select your own title for this film, what would you choose? Explain.
3. What is your interpretation of "The American Dream"? Write a personal essay explaining your vision and share it with the class.
4. If you were one of the participants in the video, what stories would you tell about your family's history? Interview relatives and write a paper about how your family has or has not found its "place at the table." If you are adopted, explore how your adoptive family's history affects your own identity and experience.
5. Choose one of the following narrator statements and write a brief essay agreeing or disagreeing with the opinion expressed.
  - a. Carol: "I think we are the ones who can make a difference, with the knowledge of what our parents and our grandparents have gone through. ...We are the turning point."
  - b. David: "A lot of people come to America thinking it's going to be so easy, but it ends up not being easy."
  - c. Deloria: "Telling our stories is the best way we have to keep our dreams alive."
  - d. Peter: "Even though these stories are so different, a lot of times it's really the same story."
  - e. Reina: "We're not born prejudiced. It comes from our homes and families, how we're brought up."
  - f. Samuel: "If you don't know your history, you don't know yourself."
  - g. Terry: "We live in a country where it's still OK to hate gay people, to beat gay people up."
  - h. Wislene: "You don't have to like me. You don't like me? That's your business. But I deserve respect."
6. Write a letter to local elected officials urging positive steps toward inclusion and equity for all citizens. As an alternative, write a letter to the editor of your local paper expressing your views on tolerance and inclusion.