

Exploring Arguments in *The Faraway Brothers*

Essay Task:

After reading *The Faraway Brothers*, write an argument/persuasion essay over one of the following topics in which you present Lauren Markham's views expressed in her book through the story of the Flores twins. For each of these essay topics, you need to find support for your argument exclusively from the book—not research or personal experience.

Each of these topics comes from Markham's "Author's Note" at the beginning of the book about what she believes her book communicates:

This book seeks to offer a complex understanding of why immigrants leave their country, what struggles they endure to get here, and the challenges they face setting roots in a foreign land. ... But something in their [the Flores twins'] story illustrates, roundly and heartbreakingly, the wounds of war, the spirit of a new generation of immigrants, and the impact of migration on the United States as well as on the tiny, time-battered country of El Salvador. (xv-xvi)

Topic #1: You are at a party where a discussion starts about our current and recent history with immigrants, especially unaccompanied minors, from Central America who are coming to the United States seeking to cross illegally or declare for asylum. A friend mentions, "They're coming for one reason and one reason only—economic." After reading Markham's book and learning about the Flores twins' experience, you see this reasoning is simplistic. Your friend's statement centers around this question: Why do these immigrants from Central America come to the United States? Markham expresses in her book that immigrants from Central America seek to enter the United States for complex reasons. Write an essay articulating Markham's reasoning on this question. You should support this claim with research the author presents in the book as well with the experiences of the Flores family depicted in the book.

Topic #2 and #3: You work for a local school district which has a large population of recent illegal immigrant "unaccompanied minors" or asylum seekers from Central America, Mexico, or other Latin American. The district has charged you with writing two persuasive/informational essays addressed to school teachers, administrators and staff who will be dealing with this population as they arrive in the districts schools. The purpose of these essays is to convince these audiences that each problem is real and will need their special attention and awareness in order to deal with this population of students with sensitivity and success. (*You will select one topic to write on.*)

Topic #2 Essay Question: Do these immigrants experience struggles getting to the United States and to our school that we as school employees need to be aware of?
--What are the key struggles and the kind of impact these struggles have on these children?

Topic #3 Essay Question: Do these immigrants face challenges as they attempt to set roots in the United States that we as school employees need to be aware of?
--What are the key challenges these students face and the kind of impact these challenges have on these children?

Topic #4: In the last sentence of Markham's "Author's Note," she states that her book is about what these unaccompanied minors' "stories reveal about who we are as a country, and what we will, or might, become" (xvi). You are writing an Op Ed for the San Antonio Express-News addressed to



the citizens of San Antonio. Based upon what you have learned from reading Markham’s book, what do you think these stories reveal about who we are as a country, and what we will, or might, become?

Essay Requirements:

Compose a 1,000 word essay presented in MLA Manuscript format (heading, double-spaced, 1” margins) that incorporates specific facts and details from Markham’s book by quoting, paraphrasing or summarizing and citing according to MLA guidelines. You should incorporate quotes from only the Markham book.

Create an appropriate title for your essay that previews your purpose, an engaging introduction paragraph, a body which “divides up the proof” presenting one reason per paragraph, and a clear conclusion paragraph. Include a Work Cited page that lists **ONLY** Markham’s book. No outside research is needed.

Getting Started With Essay #3

Step One: Picking a Topic and Understanding It

Review the essay topics and pick one that you want to write on. Examine this topic closely for the issue it is asking you to investigate. Review the following breakdown of each topic to help understand what the topic is about and what it will ask you to argue for.

IMPORTANT: For each topic, I define the Essay Question and to a large degree the Thesis. In addition, embedded into the topic is a rhetorical situation defining an audience and purpose. Hence, the real task of the essay is finding and pulling together the support from Markham’s book for each thesis toward this topic’s audience to accomplish the stated purpose

Topic #1:	
Subject:	Reasons for Immigration
Essay Question	Why do these immigrants from Central America come to the United States?
Answer/Thesis	Markham expresses in her book that immigrants from Central America seek to enter the United States for complex reasons.
Audience	Your friend at this party who seems to think these immigrants only come for economic reasons and are not coming for legitimate reasons.
Purpose	To convince this audience that immigrants leave for many complex reasons.
Argumentative Task	Identify the key causes for why this population leaves and the complexity within these causes.

Topic #2:	
Subject:	The Struggles of the Immigrant’s Journey
Essay Question	Do these immigrants experience struggles getting to the United States and to our school that we as school employees need to be aware of?
Answer/Thesis	Yes.
Audience	Teachers, staff, and administrators at a San Antonio School District
Purpose	To convince this audience about this problem so your audience can deal with these students better with more understanding.



Argumentative Task	Identify the key struggles these children experience in their journey from their home country and the kind of impact these struggles have on these children.
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Topic #3:	
Subject:	Difficulties Setting Roots in the United States
Essay Question	Do these immigrants face challenges as they attempt to set roots in the United States that we as school employees need to be aware of?
Answer/Thesis	Yes.
Audience	Teachers, staff, and administrators at a San Antonio School District
Purpose	To convince this audience about this problem so your audience can deal with these students better with more understanding.
Argumentative Task	Identify the biggest challenges these new immigrants face trying to make a new life in the United States.

Topic #4:	
Subject:	How the United States Treats Immigrants (especially these unaccompanied minors). The US Immigration System.
Essay Question	Based upon what you have learned from reading Markham's book, what do you think these stories reveal about who we are as a country, and what we will, or might, become?
Answer/Thesis	Your answer or what you think is Markham's answer
Audience	Citizens of San Antonio, readers of the Express-News
Purpose	To convince them that your claim is reasonable or valid.
Argumentative Task	Identify the key things this book and story reveals about the United States' immigration system.

Step Two: Reading Focused on Your Topic

Re-read/skim portions of the book related to your topic. Annotate with a focus around your topic. Take notes! This close review of the book is IMPORTANT. I know it takes time, but give it the time it needs. You might review the chapter outline of the book to see which sections of the book might apply to your topic, and then review these sections more closely.

You should be doing this focused reading around your topic through WK7 and most of WK8. This reading forms the foundation of your ability to write on this topic.

E3 Invention

Before you do the Essay #3 Invention Exercise, it will be important that you have devoted sufficient time to read/review the book focused on your topic (see Step Two in Getting Started on Essay #3). Once you feel you are ready, do the E3 Invention. This exercise will ask you to think deeply about your topic and help you determine

- a) your thesis
- b) your likely primary supports
- c) a sketch of your support for each primary support



Open [this MS Word document](#) and follow the prompts for doing your invention exercise. When you are done, post it into the E3 Invention forum. <http://www.lirvin.net/l30lsitebb/E3inventF19.docx>

E3 Outline and Evidence Sheet

Once you complete your E3 Invention and first draft, you have a general plan for the structure of your essay and an idea about support. With this exercise, you will solidify your Primary Supports (each will form one paragraph in the Body of your essay), and you will COLLECT textual evidence from the book to back up your arguments. By working on this outline and evidence sheet, you will be preparing to write your more formal second draft of this essay. The more evidence you collect the better!

To do this outline, review the following Writing Guides

-- [Organization](#)

-- [Development](#)

Then review more closely these guide on finding Secondary Supports

[Strategies for Developing Support](#)

Review this [example of a partially filled out Notecatcher](#) Evidence Sheet.

Then open and fill out this E3 Outline and Evidence Sheet

-- [MS Word version for filling out electronically](#)

-- [PDF version to print and fill in by hand](#)

-- post into the E3 Outline and Evidence Sheet assignment when you are done.

