The Impacts of Gentrification

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Instructor Notes

This essay unit is designed to be used as the second unit of the semester, following Kris Messer's unit on "Identity" and preceding Nancy Murray's unit on the "Art of Making A Difference." The theme for the semester is an exploration of community—what it means to be an individual member, ways we share life and space together, and how to meaningfully and creatively enact change.

This particular unit is set up for a Tuesday/Thursday class schedule, during a traditional 15-week semester, and spans four weeks. Each ENGL 101 class period is divided into four segments—a reading quiz (10 minutes), a discussion (20 minutes), a mini-lesson (20 minutes), and an activity (30 minutes).

Each ACLT class period begins with a discussion of any questions about the unit, the unit essay, or anything else going on in ENGL 101 (5-10 minutes). While the ENGL 101 students will work through the selected episodes of the There Goes the Neighborhood podcast on their own, the ACLT students will listen together as a cohort (20-30 minutes). Furthermore, they will be responsible for responding to each episode in their Blackboard journals (15-20 minutes). The rest of the class will be spent reviewing the reading strategy they will use to annotate the ENGL 101 homework article (30 minutes). Whatever time remains can be used to either begin reading the article via that night's annotation method or to complete the activity started in ENGL 101.

For each essay unit, students will be divided into peer groups. They will work within these groups for the duration of the unit—particularly during the discussion and activity segments of each class period, as well as when they workshop the rough drafts of their individual essays. In addition, the group will have the chance to showcase their collaborative efforts via a culminating group presentation.

During the first essay unit of the semester, students participated in mini-lessons on the following topics: basic essay structure, crafting thesis statements, integrating sources via quotes, paraphrase, and summary, and the basics of MLA format and citation. In this second essay unit, students will build upon these foundational skills as they learn to develop an argument, support their argument via common and researched sources, and anticipate and respond to counterarguments. In addition, students will learn the essential search and evaluation strategies they'll need to successfully complete the unit's essay, as well as future research-based academic writing assignments.

Students are expected to meet one-on-one with me at least twice during the semester—once during the first or second week of class for an initial getting to know each other session and again after the completion of this unit to review their progress through the course so far, as well as my feedback on their first two essay assignments. If students would like additional time for personalized conferencing for drafts in progress, they may
set up sessions during my office hours. Students are also encouraged to visit the
Writing and Literacy Center for further individualized support and attention.

*Instructor's Note: This essay unit was created as a part of the Certified ALP Instructor
program and therefore, while grounded in pedagogical theory, has yet to be tested in a
real, live classroom. As an adjunct, I'm unsure when I'll have the opportunity to teach
ALP again and try out this unit, so if you do so before me, I welcome any and all
comments, feedback, and suggestions based on your experience. 😊
Common Readings

- Podcast
  - *There Goes the Neighborhood*
    - “Mouth to Ear” (Season 1—Episode 2)
    - “Williamsburg, What’s Good?” (Season 1—Episode 6)
    - “It’s Complicated” (Season 1—Episode 8)
    - “This Is a Black Neighborhood. You Aren’t Black.” (Season 2—Episode 4)
    - “Change the Name of the Arts District to the Luxury District” (Season 2—Episode 6)
    - “Coffee, Pizza and Beer” (Season 2—Episode 7)
      https://www.wnyctudios.org/shows/neighborhood

- Articles
  - “While Some Things Change, Some Things Stay the Same: Reflections on the Study of Gentrification,” *City & Community*
    http://eds.a.ebscohost.com.ccbcmd.idm.oclc.org/eds/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=cf1e205-5c1c-47ac-a6c9-d83a05aa6956%40sessionmgr4007&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c210ZQ%3d%3d#db=sih&AN=118171750
  - “Gentrification in Three Paradoxes,” *City & Community*
    http://eds.a.ebscohost.com.ccbcmd.idm.oclc.org/eds/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=024d6c6b-a5fc-4a2e-9724-f69f94cb9f9%40sessionmgr4010&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c210ZQ%3d%3d#db=sih&AN=118171754
  - “Five myths about gentrification,” *The Washington Post*
    https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/five-myths-about-gentrification/2016/06/03/b6c80e56-1ba5-11e6-8c7b-6931e66333e7_story.html?utm_term=.0c68e99981e3
  - “Could gentrification save some cities?,” *CNN*
  - “How Baltimore Quietly Became the East Coast’s Next Cool City,” *Smithsonian*
  - ““Black branding”—how a D.C. neighborhood was marketed to white millennials,” *The Washington Post*
    https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/black-branding--how-a-dc-neighborhood-was-marketed-to-white-millenials/2017/05/02/68b0ae06-2f47-11e7-9534-00e4656c22aa_story.html?utm_term=.1473e10d6895
Additional Resources

- Video Clips
  - “Gentrification is coming!,” *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt*
    https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IkJA6FjaGLs
  - “Frank Gallagher on Gentrification,” *Shameless*
    https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UbCxmKhZK4A
  - “We Rep Brooklyn,” *She’s Gotta Have It*
    https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DJnGxVJ1zk4
  - “Bushwick, Brooklyn 2015,” *Saturday Night Live*
    https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wAsBta25OGQ
  - “Endangered,” *The North Pole*
    https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=drRPflp1fxc

- Articles
  - “What Time is Gentrification?,” *City & Community*
    http://eds.a.ebscohost.com.ccbcmd.idm.oclc.org/eds/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=e1abba87-752e-4786-a657-a4970c4a11840sessionmgr4010&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmU9c2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#AN=118171752&db=sih
  - “In Defense of Gentrification,” *The Atlantic*
  - “This Is What Happens After a Neighborhood Gets Gentrified,” *The Atlantic*
  - “When Gentrification Is a Mental Health Issue,” *City Lab*
    https://www.citylab.com/equity/2018/03/when-gentrification-is-a-mental-health-issue/556526/

- Case Studies
  - “When Gentrification Knocks on the Wrong Door,” *The New York Times*
  - “A Gentrification Story with a Happy Ending,” *The New Yorker*
    https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/a-gentrification-story-with-a-happy-ending
  - “Gentrification threatens diversity of Baltimore neighborhoods,” *The Baltimore Sun*
  - “Can a Baltimore Neighborhood Avoid the Pitfalls of Gentrification?,” *Next City*
    https://nextcity.org/daily/entry/gentrification-baltimore-station-north-arts-greenmount-west
Tools
  o *Neighborhood Scout*
    https://www.neighborhoodscout.com/
  o *U.S. Census 2010*
    https://www.census.gov/2010census/
  o "Discover Baltimore City Neighborhoods," *Live Baltimore*
    https://livebaltimore.com/neighborhoods/
  o "Baltimore Gentrification Maps and Data," *Governing*

*Instructor's Note: These are other useful resources I found while creating this unit. While some worked their way into class activities and discussions, others I simply found interesting or wanted to use but couldn't figure out the right way to do so. Feel free to add to this list or to substitute any of the above materials as common readings, conversation starters, research guides, etc. If you make any modifications, I'd love to hear what you used, what you did, and how it went!*
Unit Essay

Prompt

Gentrification has been happening for years, but only recently has this urban phenomenon begun to receive focused and sustained national attention. Typically, gentrification is portrayed—sometimes literally!—as a black and white social issue. However, when you begin to examine the various factors that cause gentrification, as well justifications of it, this current hot topic seems better cast in various shades of gray.

For this essay, I'm explicitly inviting you to join me and each other in further probing and exploring these gray areas. Throughout this unit, we'll hear firsthand from proponents of gentrification, as well as its opponents. In addition, we'll review the history of gentrification—where the term first originated, the circumstances under which gentrification arose and continues, and how the process has or hasn't evolved over time. We'll also examine empirical studies of who actually benefits from gentrification versus who misses out and why and look for evidence of the impacts of gentrification in our own lives. Lastly, we'll seek to answer the ultimate question of whether or not there's a “right” way to gentrify, and if so, what would that look like?

Using the essential questions below as a guide, you'll take a hard stance on gentrification (i.e., based on the class readings, your participation in our in-class activities and discussions, your own personal experiences with gentrification, and additional outside research you'll each be doing, you're deciding to be either for OR against gentrification). While you are allowed to attribute conditions to your stance (e.g., I am for gentrification in these instances OR I am against gentrification in these communities), you MUST choose a side. You must also support your choice with valid and appropriate proof and present your argument via a clear and organized line of reasoning. Your audience for this essay are the members of your own home community, who you are trying to convince to take your side. You are encouraged to identify and consider their unique needs and respond accordingly.

Essential Questions

- Is gentrification inevitable? What factors contribute to gentrification?
- Is gentrification always bad/harmful? Is there a way gentrification can be good/helpful?
- Who does gentrification advantage/disadvantage? What's gentrification really about (e.g., money, power, race, etc.)?
- Can different people learn to truly live together? What responsibility do we have to each other/what role can we play in enacting mutual positive change?
- How is gentrification affecting Baltimore? Where do we see the effects of gentrification in our own lives?

Requirements

- 1,000-1,500 words (4-6 full pages)
- At least 5 sources—3 from common readings (1 can be podcast) & 2 researched
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<th>ENGL 101</th>
<th>Homework</th>
<th>ACLT 053</th>
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<tr>
<td>**Week 1</td>
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<td>**Day 1 (Tues)</td>
<td>Watch “Gentrification is coming!,” “Frank Gallagher on Gentrification,”</td>
<td>Listen “Mouth to Ear”</td>
<td>Listen “Mouth to Ear”—Free write responses to prompt in Blackboard journal</td>
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<td>“We Rep Brooklyn,” “Bushwick, Brooklyn 2015,” &amp; “Endangered”</td>
<td>Read “While Some Things Change, Some Things Stay the Same: Reflections on</td>
<td>Reading Strategy: Cornell Notes—Begin the reading in pairs or solo. I will</td>
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<td>Discussion: What is gentrification?</td>
<td>of Gentrification”</td>
<td>be checking next class to ensure you completed your annotation. If you</td>
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<td>Lesson: Personal vs. Academic Writing</td>
<td>Finish “Neighborhood DNA” discussion post—In addition to posting your</td>
<td>finish, you may work on other ENGL 101 homework.</td>
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<td>Activity: Neighborhood DNA</td>
<td>own neighborhood ranking/defense, remember to respond to 2 classmates by</td>
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<td>the start of next class period!</td>
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<td>**Week 1</td>
<td>Reading Quiz</td>
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<td>**Day 2 (Thurs)</td>
<td>Discussion: Who does gentrification impact?</td>
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<td>Lesson: Finding Sources</td>
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<td>Activity: Source Search</td>
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<td>**Week 2</td>
<td>Reading Quiz</td>
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<td>**Day 1 (Tues)</td>
<td>Discussion: What factors contribute to gentrification?</td>
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<td>Lesson: Evaluating Sources</td>
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<td>Activity: The C.R.A.A.P. Test</td>
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| Week 2 Day 2 (Thurs) | Reading Quiz | Listen "This is a Black Neighborhood. You Aren’t Black."  
Discussion: When is gentrification good?  
Lesson: Developing an Argument  
Activity: Letter to a Friend  
Read "Black branding—how a D.C. neighborhood was marketed to white millennials"  
Finish "Letter to a Friend" discussion post—In addition to posting your own letter, remember to respond to 2 classmates by the start of next class period!  
Reading Strategy: Group Text—Instead of getting a head start on tonight's reading, we'll be participating in a critical thinking exercise to assess our knowledge so far. If we finish early, you may work on other ENGL 101 homework. |
|---------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 3 Day 1 (Tues) | Reading Quiz | Listen "Change the Name of the Arts District to the Luxury District" & "Coffee, Pizza and Beer"  
Discussion: Can't we all just get along?  
Lesson: Supporting an Argument  
Activity: Ideal Neighborhood  
Read "How Baltimore Quietly Became the East Coast's Next Cool City"  
Finish "Ideal Neighborhood" blog post—In addition to posting your own collage, remember to respond to 2 classmates by the start of next class period!  
Reading Strategy: Schema Chart—Begin the reading in pairs or solo. I will be checking next class to ensure you completed your annotation. If you finish, you may work on other ENGL 101 homework. |
| Week 3 Day 2 (Thurs) | Reading Quiz | Gentrification Essay rough draft—Remember to bring in 4 printed copies of your essay (one for each member of your unit group including you) for our peer workshop next class period!  
Discussion: How is gentrification affecting Baltimore?  
Lesson: Responding to Counterarguments  
Activity: Baltimore: A Case Study  
Listen "Coffee, Pizza and Beer"—Free write responses to prompt in Blackboard journal  
Reading Strategy: Dinner Party—Today, we'll be doing an activity that ties all the course materials together for this unit and that will help you identify potential support you can use in your unit essay. |
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<td>Gentrification Essay peer workshop</td>
<td>Gentrification Essay group presentation—Remember to upload a copy of your presentation via Blackboard before the start of class!</td>
<td>Gentrification Essay final draft—Remember to upload your essay to Blackboard before the start of class!</td>
<td>Create a Revision Plan—Based on the peer feedback you received from your unit group in ENGL 101, write a clear step-by-step plan of the changes you're going to make to the final draft of your unit essay. If you finish, go ahead and begin making the revisions. Don't forget to bring in your favorite unique drink, snack, or other item from your neighborhood to share with the rest of the class during our End of Unit Celebration!</td>
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<td>Work on group presentation</td>
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*Instructor’s Note: Since this unit will likely be adapted to meet the specific desires of the instructor and the unique needs of their students in any given semester, I’ve intentionally left out the materials for the ENGL 101 mini-lessons. If interested, I’m more than happy to provide the ones I end up using once I’ve had the opportunity to teach this unit in coming semesters. However, I imagine these can easily be created or repurposed from other writing courses taught previously.*