



Center for

EUROPEAN STUDIES

at the University of Florida

Euro Bookclub

Spring 2024

ces.ufl.edu

ces@clas.ufl.edu

Lesson Plan: *A Short Border Handbook: A Journey through the Immigrant's Labyrinth*

2024 Spring Educators' Euro Bookclub-UF Center for European Studies

By Kyeong Kim

Grade Level: 11-12th grades

Subject: English Language Arts

Theme/Topic: Understanding Immigrant Experiences through *A Short Border Handbook: A Journey through the Immigrant's Labyrinth* by Gazmend Kapllani

Objectives:

- Students will analyze the themes and motifs in *A Short Border Handbook* by Gazmend Kapllani.
- Students will engage in critical thinking and discussion to deepen their understanding of the text.
- Students will develop their writing skills by composing a reflective essay on the immigrant experience.

Wisconsin Common Core Standards:

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.2: Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.3: Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Materials:

- Copies of *A Short Border Handbook: A Journey Through the Immigrant's Labyrinth* by Gazmend Kapllani
- Whiteboard or blackboard
- Markers or chalk
- Paper and pens/pencils
- Chromebook
- Materials for posters

Procedure:

Introduction of the book

1. Ask students if they have ever read any books or stories about the immigrant experience.
2. Discuss briefly what they know or understand about the challenges faced by immigrants.
3. Introduce the book *A Short Border Handbook: A Journey Through the Immigrant's Labyrinth* by Gazmend Kapllani with a brief overview of the plot and themes using [these slides](#).
4. Explain brief history of Albania using [these slides](#).
5. Explain the objectives of the lesson and the importance of understanding the immigrant experience through literature.

Reading and Analysis

1. Distribute copies of the book to each student.
2. Students will have time to read the book silently in class (and at home).

3. While reading, students will identify and write down in their [reading journal](#) any themes or motifs they notice in the text.

Group Activity

1. Divide the class into small groups.
2. In their groups, students will decide which theme or motif they want to work on.
3. Students will discuss and analyze how the theme or motif they chose is developed in the text and find evidence from the book to support their analysis
4. Students will take notes in [this worksheet](#) while discussing.
5. Each group will prepare a short presentation summarizing their findings and be ready to share with the class.

Class Discussion

1. Have each group present their analysis of the theme or motif they chose.
2. Encourage other students to ask questions or provide additional insights.
3. After each group's presentation, facilitate a class discussion on the overall themes and motifs present in the book, using the following questions:
 - How can we apply the lessons from Albania's history and Kapllani's experiences to current global issues?
 - How do the themes you presented relate to the broader immigrant experience?
4. Encourage students to make connections and draw conclusions about the immigrant experience. Explain the importance of literature in fostering empathy and understanding of different cultures and experiences.

Summative Assessment: Reflective Essay

1. Students will write a reflective essay on the immigrant experience based on their reading of *A Short Border Handbook*.
2. Students will choose a prompt for the essay from these two:
 - Reflect on the challenges and triumphs faced by immigrants as depicted in *A Short Border Handbook*. Use evidence from the text to support your answer.
 - Compare and contrast the perspectives of the protagonist and another character in *A Short Border Handbook* regarding their experiences as immigrants. How do their different perspectives contribute to the overall understanding of the immigrant experience? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.
3. Remind students of the following essay Guidelines:
 - Begin with an introduction that provides context and a clear thesis statement.
 - Develop the essay with well-structured paragraphs that support your thesis statement.
 - Use specific examples from *A Short Border Handbook* to illustrate your points.
 - Conclude the essay by summarizing your main points and offering a thoughtful reflection on the immigrant experience.
 - Remember to proofread your essay for clarity, coherence, and grammar before submitting it.
 - Word Limit: 600-800 words

Reading Journal: *A Short Border Handbook: A Journey through the Immigrant's Labyrinth*

Name _____

	Summary	Key ideas & concepts	Questions or thoughts
Chapters 1-5			
Chapters 6-10			
Chapters 11-15			
Chapters 16-20			

Chapters 21-25			
Chapters 26-30 & Epilogue			

Group Activity Notes: ***A Short Border Handbook: A Journey through the Immigrant's Labyrinth***

Group Member's Names: _____

<p>Theme or Motif (Circle the theme/motif that your group chose)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Kapllani discusses the struggle of maintaining one's identity in a new country. How does immigration affect one's identity? 2. What does the book tell about the search for belonging and the feeling of being an outsider, or the concept of 'home'? 3. What does the book reveal about the relationship between language and belonging? How might language learning be both a struggle and an opportunity for immigrants? 4. What does the book suggest about cultural assimilation and preservation? 5. How does contrasting Kapllani's perspective/immigrant's hope vs. the host country's viewpoint/societal challenges enhance our understanding of immigration?
<p>How is the theme or motif developed in the text?</p>	
<p>Evidence from the book to support your analysis (quotes with page number)</p>	
<p>Notes for Presentation</p>	<p>How are you going to present your findings (e.g., poster, PowerPoint slides, or other visual aid)?</p> <p>Who is responsible for what part?</p> <p>Other notes:</p>

History of Albania

***A Short Border Handbook: A Journey Through the Immigrant's Labyrinth* by Gazmend Kapllani**

Introduction to Albania

- Located in Southeast Europe on the Balkan Peninsula.
- Rich history influenced by various civilizations and empires.
- Gained independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1912.






Albania Under Communism



- Enver Hoxha's regime (1944-1985) established one of the most repressive communist states.
- Isolated from both the Western bloc and the Eastern bloc during the Cold War.
- How might living in such isolation affect a country and its people?



The Fall of Communism in Albania

- Transitioned to democracy after the fall of communism in 1991.
 - Faced economic hardship and political instability.
 - How do you think these challenges impacted Albanian society?
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Albanian Diaspora and Immigration

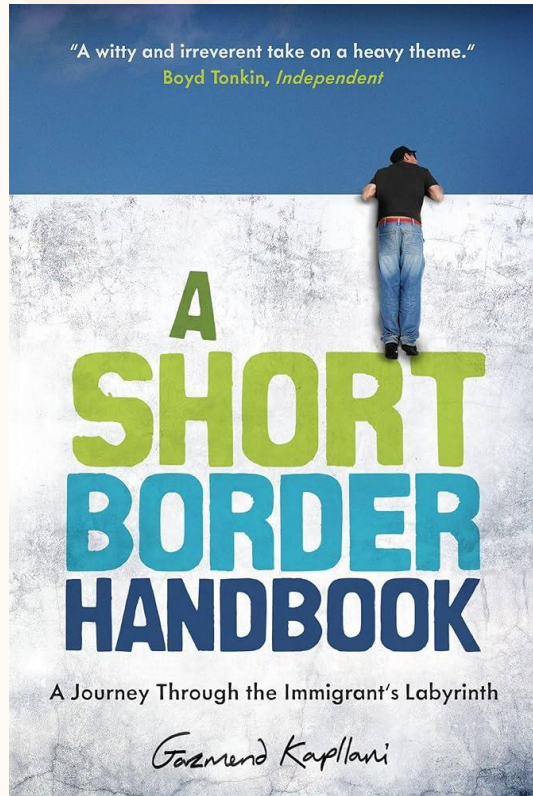


- Large-scale emigration due to political and economic factors.
- Albanian communities established worldwide, particularly in Italy, Greece, and the United States.



Albania's Modern Challenges and Progress

- Efforts towards economic growth and European Union integration.
 - Ongoing issues with corruption and organized crime.
 - How do these modern challenges affect Albanians' decisions to stay or emigrate?
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Gazmend Kapllani's *A Short Border Handbook*



- Explores the the immigrant's journey and challenges through a personal and philosophical lens.
- Based on Kapllani's own journey from Albania to Greece.



Why Study Immigration through Literature?

- Engages empathy
 - Provides diverse perspectives
 - Why might personal narratives be particularly powerful in understanding immigration?
 - What can we learn about ourselves and others through literature about immigration experiences?
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Themes of Identity and Belonging

(While reading the book, think about the following questions)

- Kapllani discusses the struggle of maintaining one's identity in a new country. How does immigration affect one's identity?
- What does the book tell about the search for belonging and the feeling of being an outsider, or the concept of 'home'?
- What does the book reveal about the relationship between language and belonging?

Identity and Belonging



9/22/2018

Themes of Identity and Belonging

(While reading the book, think about the following questions)

- How might language learning be both a struggle and an opportunity for immigrants?
- What does the book suggest about cultural assimilation and preservation?
- How do these themes relate to the broader immigrant experience?

Identity and Belonging



9/22/2018

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Contrasting Perspectives on Immigration

(While reading the book, think about the following questions)



- Kapllani's perspective vs. the host country's viewpoint.
- The immigrant's hope juxtaposed with societal challenges.
- How does contrasting these perspectives enhance our understanding of immigration?