



Pre-Activity: Making Connections

Break class into groups of four and ask them to come up with a list of at least three things they all have in common. After a few minutes, ask students to report to the classroom examples of their commonalities. Clarifying questions that focus on meaning – questions that start with “why is ...” or “what did you learn ...” – will be very helpful.

If conversations about an example occurred, point out that the shared connection served as a catalyst in learning more. The further discussion is an attempt by both parties to **actively** dialogue and participate in meaning making.

Selene Bruk: Survivor Testimony

Think about a time when someone acted on your behalf or came to your aid. Reflect on the situation, how you felt and what it meant to you. Write about this experience, sharing how you viewed it at the time it was happening and how you view it now.

Remember, you do not need to recall a traumatic event. You may use any memory that fits the scenario of someone helping you. It could be because someone felt like doing something nice, was doing the right thing in a difficult circumstance or came to your aid in a dire situation.

Listening

The first part of the process of being an active “rememberer” requires making a connection. You cannot make a connection without actively listening. As you listen, think about what Selene is saying and find something that speaks to you about what she is sharing.

[3 minute video clip]

Making Connections: Memory to Memory

Although the situations are worlds apart, think about how what you experienced helps you to make meaning from what Selene experienced. Think about how listening to your own past and to that of another gives you insight into what it means to be a human being sharing space with – and having an effect on - other human beings. This is the process – the process of meaning making – that happens when you are actively in dialogue with memory.

In a focus free-write, take a few minutes to write down your thoughts on the meaning you’re making and about the process you have started.



Creating a Work of Art

Before working on your final piece, please note the term: “re-presents.” You should not be writing a summary of a memory, but what the memory means. If it helps, think about the difference between re-presenting and representing as the difference between a literary critique and a summary: one discusses meaning and impact while the other is a retelling of the story.

From your free-write, create a piece in whatever form you feel most comfortable - prose, poetry or art - that expressed what you’ve come to understand about the process or the meaning you made ... or both.