



Enrique's Journey Discussion Ideas

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The role of Faculty Orientation Guides on Academic Day is to introduce the student groups to the concepts of critical thinking and discussion in higher education. Each FOG is expected to read the common read for the incoming class and prepare for a discussion of relevant materials that engage students in meaningful ways. Every FOG and SOG team will have different ways to approach the text--this list of possible approaches is meant to help your team formulate the impactful discussion you plan to have with your orientation group.

There will be an FYS Roundtable to further the immigration discussion, as well as several other events throughout the academic year.

Discussion Ideas:

1. Why are we reading this book? What tone does it set for our academic careers?
2. Frequently we are exposed to immigration through abstract facts and figures that are skewed via specific lenses depending on the purposes of the interpreter. How does *Enrique's Journey* humanize undocumented immigrants?
 - a. Hispanic data from **Pew Research Center** (<http://www.pewhispanic.org/>)
 - i. Are there any differences between the impression the media and "talking heads" feed us about immigration (especially Latinx immigration) and what the reality is based on unbiased data?
 - b. Lenses impact how we see real humans in our daily interactions. Is there bias for or against immigrants, especially Latinx immigrants, in our communities?
 - c. When illegal immigration and "illegal immigrants" are discussed, to whom is the discussion referring? What does that say about perceptions of the issue as a whole?
 - i. **Pew Sources for Illegal Immigration** (<http://www.pewresearch.org/topics/unauthorized-immigration/>)
3. From a literary perspective, Enrique is problematic as a protagonist.
 - a. Discuss *Enrique's Journey* from the perspective of Enrique as the protagonist. What is his fatal flaw?
 - b. Do you, as a reader, empathize with him? Why or why not?
4. Enrique's mother, Lourdes, like Carmen, Sonia Nazario's housekeeper, leaves her children behind. From Enrique's perspective, his mother abandoned him, but from Lourdes's perspective, she was giving them hope of a better future. (p. X, 191)
 - a. Which perspective is correct?
 - b. Are the mothers' actions understandable? Is Enrique's perspective understandable?
5. Enrique embarks on this journey with a hope of how it will end.
 - a. What is his vision?
 - b. How is his journey and transition similar to what students might experience when leaving home for college? (p. 191)
 - i. Determination, Persistence, Fear
6. Nazario follows Enrique for part of his journey without intervening--staying true to what she believes is journalistic integrity and ethical behavior.
 - a. Is it right for her not to intervene?
 - b. If she had intervened, how would that have changed the story and its impact?
 - c. In what way is this stance of no interference similar to that of an ally?



7. Nazario rides the trains following portions of Enrique's journey.
 - a. How is her experience different?
 - b. How does she have privilege that those riding the train do not?
8. Nazario's book bears witness to the injustices that the immigrants endure.
 - a. How does she bear witness?
 - b. Is that important? Why?
9. Like most undocumented immigrants, Carmen, Lourdes, and Enrique are part of a thriving subeconomy that relies on/exploits undocumented workers.
 - a. What would happen if that labor source were no longer available?
 - b. How does that subeconomy simultaneously empower undocumented immigrants?
 - c. How is this subeconomy an example of exploitation?
10. How have immigration policies changed over the years?
 - a. Compare the experience on p. 249 to today's policies.
 - b. Read *The New Colossus* with the group. Is this the vision of immigration we currently embrace as a country? Is it desirable?

Also known as the Statue of Liberty poem, *The New Colossus* and its famous last lines have become part of American history. The sonnet by Emma Lazarus was mounted inside the pedestal of the statue:

*Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glowes world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"*

11. Addiction plays a major role in Enrique's life.
 - a. What are some factors that contribute to his addictive behaviors?
 - b. Does his addiction change your perceptions of him?
 - c. He states that when he comes to the US, he will no longer use.
 - i. What does that say about his perception of his addiction?
 - ii. Is that a viable plan to address the addiction? Why or why not?
 - d. How do his addictive behaviors impact his ability to make choices?
 - i. What are the consequences of those choices?
12. Nazario offers equal opportunity critique of immigration policies of previous and current administrations. View her TedX talk at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XA_SUOareNQ&vl=en
 - a. What is her approach to the immigration debate?
 - b. How does that resonate with you?