

# Handouts

## Personal Creed

**CLARIBEL ALEGRÍA** was born in Nicaragua, but grew up in Santa Ana, El Salvador. She attended George Washington University in Washington, DC. Originally traveling through Europe with her husband and translator, Darwin “Bud” Flakoll, she became an exile when she spoke out against the Salvadoran military’s role in the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero. A celebrated poet, novelist, and translator, her books include [\*Luisa in Realityland\*](#), [\*Ashes of Izalco\*](#), and *I Survive*, which won the Casa de las Américas prize for poetry. She currently lives in Managua, Nicaragua.

I believe in my people  
who have been exploited  
for five hundred years  
I believe in their sons  
conceived in sorrow and struggle  
who suffered under the Pontius Pilates  
and were martyred  
sequestered  
sacrificed  
descended into the hell  
of the Media Luna  
Some were resurrected  
from among the dead  
and returned again  
to the guerrilla  
they went up the mountain  
and will come back  
to judge their slayers  
I believe in the brotherhood of man  
in the Union of Central America  
in the blue cows of Chagall  
in the cronopios  
I don’t know if I believe  
in the forgiveness  
of the Squadrons of Death  
but I do believe  
in the resurrection of the oppressed  
in the Church of the people  
in the power of the people  
forever and ever  
Amen.

## Style Imitation: Side-by-side Text Comparison

Personal Creed by Claribel Alegria	The Apostles Creed
<p>I believe in my people            who have been exploited            for five hundred years            I believe in their sons            conceived in sorrow and struggle            who suffered under the Pontius Pilates            and were martyred            sequestered            sacrificed            descended into the hell            of the Media Luna            Some were resurrected            from among the dead            and returned again            to the guerrilla            they went up the mountain            and will come back            to judge their slayers            I believe in the brotherhood of man            in the Union of Central America            in the blue cows of Chagall            in the cronopios            I don't know if I believe            in the forgiveness            of the Squadrons of Death            but I do believe            in the resurrection of the oppressed            in the Church of the people            in the power of the people            forever and ever            Amen.</p>	<p>I believe in God, the Father almighty,            creator of heaven and earth.</p> <p>I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,            who was conceived by the Holy Spirit            and born of the virgin Mary.            He suffered under Pontius Pilate,            was crucified, died, and was buried;            he descended to hell.</p> <p>The third day he rose again from the dead.            He ascended to heaven            and is seated at the right hand of God the            Father almighty.</p> <p>From there he will come to judge the living            and the dead.</p> <p>I believe in the Holy Spirit,            the holy catholic church,            the communion of saints,            the forgiveness of sins,            the resurrection of the body,            and the life everlasting. Amen.</p>

## My Own Personal Creed: A Style Imitation Exercise

### Purpose:

- To explore our own personal beliefs and values in relationship to the beliefs and values of others in our society
- To experiment with the techniques of style imitation

### Assignment Summary:

- Write a style imitation of a well-known religious or patriotic text, song lyrics or poem, in the vein of Personal Creed by Claribel Alegria which imitates the Apostles Creed
- Your style imitation will mimic the structure and grammatical features of your chosen text as closely as possible, while expressing the beliefs and values that are important to you
- Try to highlight contrasts between your beliefs and values and the beliefs or values expressed in the exemplar text

### Writing Process:

1. **Brainstorming possible texts to imitate:** The class will brainstorm a list of well known texts that they might choose to imitate. Texts could include religious or patriotic texts, popular song lyrics, or famous poems.
2. **Select a text for imitation:** Choose a text to imitate that you are very familiar with and which expresses beliefs or values that you'd like to question, challenge, or build from. You could choose to use a template for the Pledge of Allegiance, The Star Spangled Banner, or The Declaration of Independence.
3. **Venn diagram:** Create a Venn Diagram to brainstorm similarities and differences between your beliefs and values and the beliefs and values expressed in your text.
4. **Draft:** Write a style imitation of your text that follows its grammatical structure as closely as possible. Have fun trying to get your writing to sound as similar to the original text as possible while expressing your own original ideas.
5. **Self reflection and/or peer review:** Use the following criteria to reflect on how you could improve your style imitation:
  - a. Accuracy of style imitation
  - b. Authentic and clear statement of student's beliefs and values
  - c. Clever social commentary that critiques, challenges, or extends the ideas of the original

## Style Imitation Templates

The Pledge of Allegiance	Student Imitation/Parody
<p>I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.</p>	<p>I pledge _____ to _____ of _____, and to _____ for which _____, one _____ under _____, _____, with _____ and _____ for _____."</p>

The Star Spangled Banner	Student Imitation/Parody
<p>Oh, say, can you see, by the dawn's early light, What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming?</p> <p>Whose broad stripes and bright stars, thro' the perilous fight'</p> <p>O'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming. And the rockets red glare, the bombs bursting in air, Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there.</p> <p>Oh, say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave</p> <p>O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?</p>	<p>Oh, say, can _____, by the _____</p> <p>What so _____ we _____ at the _____?</p> <p>Whose _____ and _____, thro' the _____</p> <p>O'er the _____ we _____, were so _____.</p> <p>And the _____, the _____ in _____, Gave _____ through the _____ that our _____.</p> <p>Oh, say, _____ that _____ yet _____</p> <p>O'er the _____ of the _____ and the _____ of the _____?</p>

The Declaration of Independence	Student Imitation/Parody
<p>We hold these truths to be self-evident,  that all men are created equal,  that they are endowed by their Creator  with certain unalienable Rights,  that among these are  Life, Liberty and the  pursuit of Happiness.--  That to secure these rights,  Governments are instituted among Men,    deriving their just powers  from the consent of the governed, --  That whenever any Form of Government  becomes destructive of these ends,  it is the Right of the People  to alter or to abolish it,  and to institute new Government,  laying its foundation  on such principles  and organizing its powers  in such form, as to them  shall seem most likely  to effect their Safety and Happiness.</p>	<p>We hold these truths to be self-evident,  that all _____ are _____,  that they are _____  with certain _____,  that among these are  _____, _____ and the  _____.--  That to _____ these _____,  _____ are _____  among _____,  _____ their _____  from the _____ of the _____, --  That whenever any _____  becomes _____ of these ends,  it is the _____  to _____ or to _____ it,  and to _____ new _____,  _____ its _____  on such _____  and _____ its _____  in such _____, as _____  shall seem _____  to _____ their _____  and _____.</p>