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Lesson

Unit: Persuasion Across Time and Space:
Analyzing and Producing Complex Texts

Lesson: Persuasion as Text: Organizational, Grammatical, and
Lexical Moves in Barbara Jordan's *All Together Now*

Handout #1: Biography of Barbara Jordan

"I realized that the best training available at an all-black university at that time was not equal to the best training one developed at a white university. Separate was not equal; it just wasn't. No matter what kind of face you put on it or how many frills you attached to it, separate was not equal. I was doing sixteen years of remedial work in thinking."

Barbara Jordan, *A Self-Portrait* (emphasis included in original)

Barbara Jordan was an American politician and a leader of the Civil Rights movement. She was known as a thoughtful, powerful, speaker and as a person committed to social justice and equality for all people.

Barbara Jordan grew up in a poor neighborhood in Houston, Texas. She attended segregated public schools, and an all-black college, where she graduated at the top of her class.

Barbara Jordan chose law as a career because she believed she would then be able to have an impact on racial injustice. She wanted to attend Harvard's law school, but was advised that a black woman student from a Southern school would probably not be accepted.

In her own life she accomplished many "firsts" as an African American woman. She was the first African American to attend Boston University Law School, the first African American elected to the Texas Senate since 1883, the first southern African American female elected to the United States House of Representatives, and the first African American to be a keynote speaker at a national Democratic convention.



Barbara Jordan devoted her life to closing the gap between what the constitution and legislation promised to all citizens and the discrimination that many poor and minority people faced. As a U.S. congresswoman, she supported legislation that required banks to lend and make other services available to underserved poor and minority communities. She supported the renewal of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and expansion of that act to cover language minorities. This extended protection to Hispanics in Texas and was opposed by Texas Governor and Secretary of State. She argued passionately for equity and inclusion for all people.

In her speech at the 1992 Democratic convention Barbara Jordan said:

We are one, we Americans, we're one, and we reject any intruder who seeks to divide us on the basis of race and color. We honor cultural identity--we always have, we always will. But, separatism is not allowed (applause)--separatism is not the American way. We must not allow ideas like political correctness to divide us and cause us to reverse hard-won achievements in human rights and civil rights."

On her death in 1996, at age 59, she became the first African-American woman to be buried in the Texas State Cemetery.

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Handout #2: Reading with a Focus

As you read, take notes on your assigned question. When other members of your group share their responses to questions, take notes in the corresponding box.

Focus Questions	Notes from Reading
1. Who is Barbara Jordan and why is she considered important?	
2. What are two or three important facts to know about Barbara Jordan?	
3. What do we know about her commitment to equality and social justice from reading her biography?	
4. What do we know about the attitudes and beliefs of society at the time from reading about her accomplishments?	

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Handout #3: Barbara Jordan, "All Together Now"

notes

When I look at race relations today I can see that some positive changes have come about. But much remains to be done, and the answer does not lie in more legislation. We *have* the legislation we need; we have the laws. Frankly, I don't believe that the task of bringing us all together can be accomplished by government. What we need now is soul force—the efforts of people working on a small scale to build a truly tolerant harmonious society. And parents can do a great deal to create that tolerant society.

We all know that race relations in America have had a very rocky history. Think about the 1960's when Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was in his heyday and there were marches and protests against segregation and discrimination. The movement culminated in 1963 with the March on Washington.

Following that event, race relations reached an all-time peak. President Lyndon B. Johnson pushed through the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which remains the fundamental piece of civil rights legislation in this century. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 ensured that everyone in our country could vote. At last, black people and white people seemed ready to live together in peace.

But that is not what happened. By the 1990's the good feelings had diminished. Today the nation seems to be suffering from compassion fatigue, and issues such as race relations and civil rights have never regained momentum.

Those issues, however, remain crucial. As our society becomes more diverse, people of all races and backgrounds will have to learn to live together. If we don't think this is important, all we have to do is look at the situation in Bosnia today.

Source: "All Together Now" from *Sesame Street Parents Magazine*, July/August, 1994

How do we create a harmonious society out of so many kinds of people? The key is tolerance—the one value that is indispensable in creating community.

If we are concerned about community, if it is important to us that people not feel excluded, then we have to do something. Each of us can decide to have one friend of a different race or background in our mix of friends. If we do this, we'll be working together to push things forward.

What can parents do? We can put our faith in young people as a positive force. I have yet to find a racist baby. Babies come into the world as blank as slates and, with their beautiful innocence, see others not as different but as enjoyable companions. Children learn ideas and attitudes from the adults who nurture them. I absolutely believe that children do not adopt prejudices unless they absorb them from their parents or teachers.

The best way to get this country faithful to the American dream of tolerance and equality is to start small. Parents can actively encourage their children to be in the company of people who are of other racial and ethnic backgrounds. If a child thinks, "Well, that person's color is not the same as mine, but she must be okay because she likes to play with the same things I like to play with," that child will grow up with a broader view of humanity.

I'm an incurable optimist. For the rest of the time that I have left on this planet I want to bring people together. You might think of this as a labor of love. Now, I know that love means different things to different people. But what I mean is this: I care about you because you are a fellow human being and I find it okay in my mind, in my heart, to simply say to you, I love you. And maybe that would encourage you to love me in return.

It is possible for all of us to work on this—at home, in our schools, at our jobs. It is possible to work on human relationships in every area of our lives.

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Handout #4: Reading Jigsaw

Cut along dotted line-----

When I look at race relations today I can see that some positive changes have come about. But much remains to be done, and the answer does not lie in more legislation. We have the legislation we need; we have the laws. Frankly, I don't believe that the task of bringing us all together can be accomplished by government. What we need now is soul force—the efforts of people working on a small scale to build a truly tolerant harmonious society. And parents can do a great deal to create that tolerant society.

We all know that race relations in America have had a very rocky history. Think about the 1960's when Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was in his heyday and there were marches and protests against segregation and discrimination. The movement culminated in 1963 with the March on Washington.

Cut along dotted line-----

Following that event, race relations reached an all-time peak. President Lyndon B. Johnson pushed through the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which remains the fundamental piece of civil rights legislation in this century. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 ensured that everyone in our country could vote. At last, black people and white people seemed ready to live together in peace.

Cut along dotted line-----

But that is not what happened. By the 1990's the good feelings had diminished. Today the nation seems to be suffering from compassion fatigue, and issues such as race relations and civil rights have never regained momentum.

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How do we create a harmonious society out of so many kinds of people? The key is tolerance—the one value that is indispensable in creating community.

Cut along dotted line-----

If we are concerned about community, if it is important to us that people not feel excluded, then we have to do something. Each of us can decide to have one friend of a different race or background in our mix of friends. If we do this, we'll be working together to push things forward.

One thing is clear to me: We, as human beings, must be willing to accept people who are different from ourselves. I must be willing to accept people who don't look as I do and don't talk as I do. It is crucial that I am open to their feelings, their inner reality.

Cut along dotted line-----

What can parents do? We can put our faith in young people as a positive force. I have yet to find a racist baby. Babies come into the world as blank as slates and, with their beautiful innocence, see others not as different but as enjoyable companions. Children learn ideas and attitudes from the adults who nurture them. I absolutely believe that children do not adopt prejudices unless they absorb them from their parents or teachers.

Cut along dotted line-----

The best way to get this country faithful to the American dream of tolerance and equality is to start small. Parents can actively encourage their children to be in the company of people who are of other racial and ethnic backgrounds. If a child thinks, "Well, that person's color is not the same as mine, but she must be okay because she likes to play with the same things I like to play with," that child will grow up with a broader view of humanity.

Cut along dotted line-----

I'm an incurable optimist. For the rest of the time that I have left on this planet I want to bring people together. You might think of this as a labor of love. Now, I know that love means different things to different people. But what I mean is this: I care about you because you are a fellow human being and I find it okay in my mind, in my heart, to simply say to you, I love you. And maybe that would encourage you to love me in return.

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Directions for Jigsaw Reading

1. Read the individual section silently. Do not show it to others.
2. Decide where in the text the individual section belongs (beginning, middle, end?), and reasons for the placement.
3. When everyone in the group has finished reading silently, the student who thinks he or she has the first piece says "I think I have the first piece because..." and then justifies the decision by giving just enough information so that others can decide if they agree or not.
4. At this point, other group members agree or not. If they agree, the content is read aloud. If not someone else must volunteer.
5. Once agreement on the placement of a section is reached, the piece goes on the table face up. This process continues for the other sections of text.

Handout #5: How Writers Accomplish Their Goals

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What is the writer doing in this section of the text?	All Together Now by Barbara Jordan	How does she accomplish this? What specific language signals that?
<p>In the first sentence, what does Barbara Jordan mean by "race relations?"</p> <p>In this first paragraph, what language does Barbara Jordan use to introduce her topic? What language does she use to introduce her position on the topic?</p> <p>After reading the first paragraph, who do you think is Jordan's primary audience? How do you know?</p>	<p>When I look at race relations today I can see that some positive changes have come about. But much remains to be done, and the answer does not lie in more legislation. We have the legislation we need; we have the laws. Frankly, I don't believe that the task of bringing us all together can be accomplished by government. What we need now is soul force—the efforts of people working on a small scale to build a truly tolerant harmonious society. And parents can do a great deal to create that tolerant society.</p>	
<p>After the first sentence in paragraph 2, what do we expect the author to do next?</p> <p>What does Jordan accomplish by listing some pivotal events in improving race relations in America?</p> <p>What language does the author use to signal that laws are not enough?</p>	<p>We all know that race relations in America have had a very rocky history. Think about the 1960's when Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was in his heyday and there were marches and protests against segregation and discrimination. The movement culminated in 1963 with the March on Washington.</p> <p>Following that event, race relations reached an all-time peak. President Lyndon B. Johnson pushed through the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which remains the fundamental piece of civil rights legislation in this century. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 ensured that everyone in our country could vote. At last, black people and white people seemed ready to live together in peace.</p> <p>But that is not what happened. By the 1990's the good feelings had diminished. Today the nation seems to be suffering from compassion fatigue, and issues such as race relations and civil rights have never regained momentum.</p>	

<p>What is the writer doing in this section of the text?</p>	<p>All Together Now by Barbara Jordan</p>	<p>How does she accomplish this? What specific language signals that?</p>
<p>When Jordan gave her speech, the genocide in Bosnia was in the news almost daily. Why would a writer choose to include current information about another country after talking about events in the US?</p>	<p>Those issues, however, remain crucial. As our society becomes more diverse, people of all races and backgrounds will have to learn to live together. If we don't think this is important, all we have to do is look at the situation in Bosnia today.</p>	
<p>This paragraph consists of one question and one answer. What is she doing in the paragraph? Is she successful?</p>	<p>How do we create a harmonious society out of so many kinds of people? The key is tolerance—the one value that is indispensable in creating community.</p>	
<p>Jordan uses different levels of modality in this paragraph. What is she trying to accomplish with “have to do,” “can decide” and “we’ll (we will)?</p>	<p>If we are concerned about community, if it is important to us that people not feel excluded, then we have to do something. Each of us can decide to have one friend of a different race or background in our mix of friends. If we do this, we’ll be working together to push things forward.</p>	
<p>Jordan shifts her focus in this section. How does the question “What can parents do?” tie together or create cohesion with the first paragraph in the essay?</p>	<p>What can parents do? We can put our faith in young people as a positive force. I have yet to find a racist baby. Babies come into the world as blank as slates and, with their beautiful innocence, see others not as different but as enjoyable companions. Children learn ideas and attitudes from the adults who nurture them. I absolutely believe that children do not adopt prejudices unless they absorb them from their parents or teachers.</p>	
<p>How does the word “small” connect ideas in this paragraph to ideas in the preceding paragraph?</p>	<p>The best way to get this country faithful to the American dream of tolerance and equality is to start small. Parents can actively encourage their children to be in the company of people who are of other racial and ethnic backgrounds. If a child thinks, “Well that person’s color is not the same as mine, but she must be okay because she likes to play with the same things I like to play with,” that child will grow up with a broader view of humanity.</p>	

<p>What is the writer doing in this section of the text?</p>	<p>All Together Now by Barbara Jordan</p> <p>I'm an incurable optimist. For the rest of the time that I have left on this planet I want to bring people together. You might think of this as a labor of love. Now, I know that love means different things to different people. But what I mean is this: I care about you because you are a fellow human being and I find it okay in my mind, in my heart, to simply say to you, I love you. And maybe that would encourage you to love me in return.</p> <p>It is possible for all of us to work on this—at home, in our schools, at our jobs. It is possible to work on human relationships in every area of our lives.</p>	<p>How does she accomplish this? What specific language signals that?</p>
<p><i>How does Jordan personalize tolerance in her final paragraphs?</i></p> <p><i>How does Jordan use language to connect the ideas in these last two paragraphs ideas developed earlier?</i></p>		

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Handout #6: Find the Tie

Circle, underline or draw arrows of any instances of connections and logical ties that you find. Explain the tie in the left-hand column.

Look for examples of	Paragraphs 1-7 from <i>All Together Now</i> by Barbara Jordan, 1992	Explain the tie:
<p>Words or phrases that are repeated</p> <p>Words or phrases that are associated with the same topic</p> <p>Words that refer back to information in the beginning part of a sentence</p> <p>Words or phrases that refer back to information in previous sentences or paragraphs</p> <p>Ideas from previous sentences or paragraphs that are expanded</p>	<p>(1) When I look at race relations today I can see that some positive changes have come about. But much remains to be done, and the answer does not lie in more legislation. We have the legislation we need; we have the laws. Frankly, I don't believe that the task of bringing us all together can be accomplished by government. What we need now is soul force—the efforts of people working on a small scale to build a truly tolerant harmonious society. And parents can do a great deal to create that tolerant society.</p> <p>(2) We all know that race relations in America have had a very rocky history. Think about the 1960's when Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was in his heyday and there were marches and protests against segregation and discrimination. The movement culminated in 1963 with the March on Washington.</p> <p>(3) Following that event, race relations reached an all-time peak. President Lyndon B. Johnson pushed through the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which remains the fundamental piece of civil rights legislation in this century. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 ensured that everyone in our country could vote. At last, black people and white people seemed ready to live together in peace.</p>	

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<p>Words or phrases that are repeated</p> <p>Words or phrases that are associated with the same topic</p> <p>Words that refer back to information in the beginning part of a sentence</p> <p>Words or phrases that refer back to information in previous sentences or paragraphs</p> <p>Ideas from previous sentences or paragraphs that are expanded</p>	<p>(4) But that is not what happened. By the 1990's the good feelings had diminished. Today the nation seems to be suffering from compassion fatigue, and issues such as race relations and civil rights have never regained momentum.</p> <p>(5) Those issues, however, remain crucial. As our society becomes more diverse, people of all races and backgrounds will have to learn to live together. If we don't think this is important, all we have to do is look at the situation in Bosnia today.</p> <p>(6) How do we create a harmonious society out of so many kinds of people? The key is tolerance—the one value that is indispensable in creating community.</p> <p>(7) If we are concerned about community, if it is important to us that people not feel excluded, then we have to do something. Each of us can decide to have one friend of a different race or background in our mix of friends. If we do this, we'll be working together to push things forward.</p>	

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Handout #7: Deconstructing and Constructing Modality

Read the selection from the speech and the questions about the author's viewpoint.

Work together with your group to decide attitude or stance toward what she is saying. Provide a reason for your response.

Sentence	Question about Author's Views	Our response and evidence that supports it
<p>From paragraph 1:</p> <p>When I look at race relations today, I can see that some positive changes have come about.</p>	<p>Based on the author's use of can, do you think the author is:</p> <p>Recommending positive changes</p> <p>Saying that it is possible to see some changes</p>	
<p>We, as human beings, must be willing to accept people who are different from ourselves.</p>	<p>Based on the author's use of must, do you think the author is:</p> <p>Saying that it is necessary for people to accept each other</p> <p>Saying that it is possible to accept each other</p>	
<p>If a child thinks, "Well, that person's color is not the same as mine, but she must be okay because she likes to play with the same things I like to play with," that child will grow up with a broader view of humanity.</p>	<p>Based on the author's use of will, do you think the author is:</p> <p>Saying that that growing up with a broader view of humanity is a possibility</p> <p>Saying that growing up with a broader view of humanity is a certainty</p>	

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Handout #8: Compare/Contrast Matrix: Two Speeches

	Title: <i>I Have a Dream</i>	Title: _____
What is the author's argument? Textual evidence:		
What evidence does the author use to support his/her argument?		
What is the author's purpose, meaning what does the author want the reader to think, feel, or do?		
What type of persuasive techniques does the author use?		
What quote best represents the author's argument? Reason for choosing:		

Understanding Language

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