

## 1.2 Introduction to the Theme

### For Teachers

Before diving into skills-based learning, students will explore the broad idea of the theme by reading each text in isolation and participating in guided classroom discussions. This may require teachers to do a basic review around the analysis of each type of text (poem vs. aphorisms vs. essay) in conjunction with a discussion of the content.

Piercy's poem "To be of use" has been selected for its focus on productivity and the human desire to do meaningful work, highlighting the importance of utility. Aphorisms from Franklin's "Poor Richards" also stress the importance of utility, the inherent value of work, and our concept of functional success. Lastly, Steinbeck's "Paradox and Dream" provides a more modern critique of the "American Way of Life": his breakdown of what we do, want, and believe about success offers a place to reflect on those ideas of utility in the previous two sources.

Teachers may begin with the prompt in the description of the thematic focus overview and then have students discuss how each piece contributes to the conversation about the culture of work in the United States (currently and historically). These discussions can serve as an informal assessment by participation, formalized as structured student-led discussions utilizing the question and reflection assessments, or assessed through the dynamic mind-mapping activity (whole class or small groups, each with a specific text or thematic focus). This sample course uses a small group mind-mapping activity to demonstrate these skills.

Ultimately, students will get an introduction to the type of reading, thinking, and discussion inherent to AP Seminar. CTE Teachers may also choose to incorporate pathway-specific, career-focused articles to situate the research in relevant, content-specific knowledge.