

VIDEO

Write With... Life Stories: Your Future, Your Vision with Wyatt Cenac

by 826 National and Life Stories

GRADES 9-12

TYPE

MEMOIR NARRATIVE Imagine your life in five to ten years: What does it look like? In this lesson, you will have the chance to plan, reflect, and take steps towards achieving your goals.

WHAT YOUR STUDENTS WILL LEARN

About Life Stories

Life Stories is a 501(c)(3) non-profit media organization that creates and distributes documentaries, interviews, and educational resources about people whose lives inspire meaningful change. These stories address issues of civics, history, politics, the arts and culture by shining the spotlight on relatable human stories of purpose and meaning in times of change. They provide open access to all our content for communities and classrooms through our curated website and YouTube channel.

About The Thread

The Thread is a documentary interview series exploring what it means to live a purpose-driven life through conversations with multi-faceted people who have helped shape our society. Each 30-minute episode takes viewers on a personal journey into the life of extraordinary people who candidly share their triumphs and failures. The Thread is available on the Life Stories website and YouTube channel, and as a podcast across all major platforms. Teaching The Thread brings the series into

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the classroom with episode lessons designed to strengthen social emotional learning and media literacy skills and expand the scope of subject matter in Social Studies and English Language Arts.

WHAT YOU WILL DO

Before You Begin

Content Note:

• In this video, Wyatt Cenac speaks about his time studying at The Groundlings. The Groundlings is a well-known theatre and improv comedy school in Los Angeles, California.

Editor's Note:

- This lesson aligns with the following CASEL Standards:
 - Self-Awareness
 - Developing interests and a sense of purpose
 - Social Awareness
 - Taking others' perspectives

Introduction

Writer and comedian Wyatt Cenac, formerly a correspondent and writer on *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*, details the struggles of being a Black man in a predominantly white professional field. This episode of *The Thread* is a conversation with Wyatt Cenac whose story is one of frustration, introspection, and ultimately, a determination to help us all learn "to do better by one another." To see the full lesson created by Life Stories, please visit: Wyatt Cenac: A Writer's Life.

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Inspired by Wyatt Cenac's professional path, in this lesson, you will identify the goals you have for your future and then reflect and take steps towards achieving those goals.

STEP 1

To begin, watch this clip of Wyatt Cenac's *The Thread* video: 1:10-13:17. Then, freewrite your answer to this question in your writing journal: Wyatt Cenac saw himself in Eddie Murphy, and he tried to follow Murphy's path as he started his career. What dreams and goals do you have for your future? Who do you look up to as a role model in that work or space?

STEP 2

Next, begin imagining your life five to ten years from now. Answer the questions on page 1 of the <u>Your</u> Future, Your Vision with Wyatt Cenac—Handout to help you get started.

STEP 3

In the video, Wyatt Cenac shared some of the steps he took to achieve his goals, including sending a letter to *Saturday Night Live* that indicated his interest in working there one day. Choose one of the goals you wrote about in Step 1; then, try to identify 3-5 tangible steps you could take to help you achieve that goal. These can be big, life-changing steps (e.g., "Move to NYC"); or, they can be smaller, more manageable steps that you can start doing now (e.g., start studying Spanish).

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STEP 4

Finally, choose one of the writing prompts below.

- 1. **Imagine Your Future.** Revisit your answers on page 1 of the Your Future, Your Vision—Handout. Write about a day-in-the-life of your future self, as if you are living it. Then, reflect: How easy, or difficult, was it to imagine yourself in this future? If it was difficult, also write about why.
- 2. Dear, Mentor. Write a letter to one of the role models you identified in Step 1. Answer the questions on page 2 of the handout before you write, to help you generate the content of your letter. Bonus: Consider sending the letter (or email, direct message, etc.), like Wyatt Cenac did. You never know what doors might open! If you plan on sending your letter, we suggest you write a draft in your writing journal and then type it up. Before sending, make sure to edit for punctuation and sentence clarity!

MATERIALS

- Wyatt Cenac: Breaking Barriers In Late-Night TV *The Thread* video
- Your Future, Your Vision with Wyatt Cenac— Handout
 - 1 copy per student
- Writing journal or blank piece of paper
- Writing utensil

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