

Belonging is the
cornerstone



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

' Belonging is the cornerstone to finding identity in an individual'. To what extent is this true of your prescribed text and related texts? To a large extent, belonging is the foundation to discovery of identity to an individual. Belonging can be shown to be a part of something and needs a foundation to build up on. A sense of belonging is shown through different experiences and moments which can be part of the belonging process. In Jhumpa Lahiri's novel *The Namesake*, Gogol slowly develops a sense of belonging to his Indian heritage and his family.

In the film *Little Miss Sunshine* directed by Jonathan Dayton, a dysfunctional family develops a bond in which they learn about their relationships and the road ahead of them. The arrival drawn by Shaun Tan, shows a main character whom has arrived as an immigrant and finds it very hard to belong in a place so unfamiliar to his comfortable home. All three texts explore the foundations of belonging and how they grow to find their identity.

As an individual, Gogol from *The Namesake* develops a strong relationship with both his parents Ashima and Ashoke as he realises the important of family and his Indian culture and values. Ashima had a strong connection with Gogol before he was even born and when he was born she has an immediate bond as " she makes Gogol sweaters, blankets, mittens and caps" and " takes him in his pram for his immunizations" (pg. 35) in the same way, we learn about Ashoke's train accident in chapter one and how a train accident led Ashoke to name his son Gogol after a famous Russian author.

Its significance is that he was reading Gogol when the train accident happened. These two meaningful examples show how significant events can

bring people together In Jonathan Dayton's film, it emphasises social expectations previously set by others and having to conform to certain pressures. Each family member comes to the understanding of importance of family due to a pageant olive enters. Dialogue through a wide angled shot shows how Dwayne writes " I hate every one" Dwayne underlines ' Hate' three times.

This shows his choice to not belong because they don't meet his expectations of a family. Dwayne's writing depicts to the audience his determination to isolate himself completely, even choosing not to speak. This soon changes as he breaks his chain of silence after lashing out at his family. He comes to realize that he sister is not ' pageant material' and during his sisters performance, he joins her along with the rest of the family showing the large gesture brought about a whole amily creating a close relationship and Dwayne developing his identity through this. On page 100 we see Gogol's frustration with his name, " the only person who didn't take Gogol seriously, the only person who tormented him.. was Gogol.. " Here the author has demonstrated to the reader that nobody else judges him for his name, yet he feels that he does not belong. This reflects Gogol's insecurity with his name making him feel out of place in both cultures. Resulting to him changing his name in order to belong in his American society rather than his home culture.