

English I

Paired Passage–Synthesis



Do Now— Writer's Notebook

Question 1 In one sentence, what is the most important idea Susan Cain develops in the *Quiet* excerpt?

Question 2 In one sentence, what is the most important idea Jeff Weiss develops in the Leon Bridges article?

Now read both sentences back to yourself. **What do they have in common?**

Grammar: Subordinating Conjunctions

These words are how analytical writers compare, contrast, and connect two ideas in one precise sentence.

Conjunction	What it signals in analytical writing
Although / Even though	Acknowledges one idea while asserting another
While / Whereas	Places two ideas side by side for comparison
Because	Explains the relationship between cause and meaning

Watch the move:

Weak: Cain says society rewards extroverts.
Bridges struggled to fit in.

Strong: **Although** Cain examines cultural pressure broadly, Bridges illustrates its effects through one person's lived experience.

Three More Examples – From Our Texts

Read each sentence. Identify the conjunction. Name what it signals.

1. *Whereas Cain traces Carnegie's success to his willingness to adapt to cultural expectations, Weiss shows that Bridges succeeded precisely because he refused to adapt.*

Conjunction: Whereas | **Signal:** Contrast – two different paths to success

2. *Even though Bridges did not grow up listening to soul music, his debut album sounds like it came from another era entirely.*

Conjunction: Even though | **Signal:** Contradiction – outcome defies the expectation set up by the first clause

3. *Because both Carnegie and Bridges faced years of self-doubt before finding their voices, the texts together suggest that uncertainty may be a precondition for authentic success.*

Conjunction: Because | **Signal:** Causal relationship – shared evidence leads to a new understanding

Guided Practice – Combining Sentences

Teacher models #1. Students work in pairs on #2–6. Texts open.

Combine each pair into one analytical sentence using the suggested conjunction.

1. Use: "whereas"

Cain argues Carnegie reshaped himself to fit cultural expectations. / Bridges says soul cannot be taught.

4. Use: "because"

Bridges felt like a pariah as a child. / His isolation shaped the authenticity of his music.

2. Use: "even though"

Bridges did not grow up listening to soul music. / His music sounds like it came from another era.

5. Use: "while"

Cain traces a cultural shift across decades of American history. / Weiss focuses on one man's personal story.

3. Use: "although"

Carnegie feared being tongue-tied at crucial moments. / He became one of America's most famous public speakers.

6. Use: "whereas"

Carnegie transformed himself outwardly to meet the world's demands. / Bridges refused to change who he was.



Synthesizing Across Texts

Essential Question:

What do two texts reveal together that neither reveals alone?

Learning and Language Objectives

I can synthesize ideas from two texts by discussing, explaining, and writing a new understanding supported with evidence from both texts using academic language.

Skills Study: Synthesis

Every lesson in this course has lived at one of these three levels.

1

Comprehension

What does the text say?

First Read lessons

2

Analysis

How does the author develop that idea?

Close Read lessons

3

Synthesis

What do BOTH texts reveal together?

Today – Day 14

One rule for today: If your answer can be supported by only one text, it is not synthesis.

Synthesizing Across Texts

The most common error: answering from ONE text instead of BOTH.

Response A ✗

"In the Leon Bridges article, Bridges says 'you can't teach soul, it's who you are.' This shows that authentic identity comes from within."

Response B ✓

"While Bridges argues that authentic identity cannot be taught, Cain shows that Carnegie built his identity by learning to conform — suggesting that the source of a person's identity shapes the kind of success they achieve."

How Strong Readers Synthesize

These are not steps – they are the questions that generate synthesis.

1

What do both texts reveal together that neither reveals alone?

This is the synthesis question. If you can answer it, you have Level 3 thinking.

2

How do the authors' choices create similar or different effects?

This goes beyond what – it asks HOW. Author's craft + synthesis.

3

What new understanding can I build from placing these two texts side by side?

The new understanding is what synthesis produces. It did not exist before you read both texts.

I Do: Synthesizing Across Texts

Synthesis Set A

Topic: Finding Voice

Quiet, ¶4:

"A few years later, Dale is again impressed by the value of public speaking. His family moves to a farm three miles outside of Warrensburg, Missouri, so he can attend college there without paying room and board. Dale observes that the students who win campus speaking contests are seen as leaders, and he resolves to be one of them. He signs up for every contest and rushes home at night to practice. Again and again he loses; Dale is dogged, but not much of an orator. Eventually, though, his efforts begin to pay off. He transforms himself into a speaking champion and campus hero."

Leon Bridges, ¶7:

"At a nearby community college, Bridges studied dance, inspired by seeing his dad moonwalk as a kid, he says. He picked up singing and guitar as a hobby at first, and eventually began playing at open mics and small shows. His sound evolved from neo-soul, to folky R&B to traditional soul with horn – ideal for the last slow dance of the night."

BOTH – Shared Idea — What shared idea do both excerpts develop?

1

Although Carnegie and Bridges pursue different passions, both develop their voices through persistence and practice.

HOW – Author's Craft — How does each author show or develop that shared idea?

2

While Cain summarizes Carnegie's growth over several years, Weiss traces Bridges' artistic development through personal experiences and reflections.

NEW UNDERSTANDING — What new understanding do these excerpts create together?

3

Because both authors show that growth requires perseverance, the excerpts together suggest that finding one's voice develops over time rather than appearing instantly.

We Do: Synthesizing Across Texts

Synthesis Sets			
Set	Topic	Quiet	Leon Bridges
Synthesis Set B	Identity	¶11 – "every American was to become a performing self"	¶3 – "you can't teach soul music...it's who you are"
Synthesis Set C	Self Doubt	¶2 – "Dale worries about other things, too: thunder and lightning, going to hell, and being tongue-tied at crucial moments."	¶5 – "He describes his childhood persona in much the same way – as a pariah. After his parents separated when he was 7, he split time between suburban Fort Worth and inner-city Dallas...He was surrounded by people, but still felt alone. 'I didn't know where I fit in,' he says. 'I didn't have any friends at school. People didn't want to be friends [with me]. I had no place.'"
Synthesis Set D	Turning Point	¶8 – "But the class is an overnight sensation, and Carnegie goes on to found the Dale Carnegie Institute, dedicated to helping businessmen root out the very insecurities that had held him back as a young man."	¶8 – "Then he met Austin Jenkins, guitarist from Austin psych-rock band White Denim, at a Fort Worth bar...until Jenkins randomly stumbled upon Bridges two weeks later at a local dive, where he was playing to a crowd of five. The first song he played? 'Coming Home.'"

BOTH – Shared Idea – What shared idea do both excerpts develop?

1

HOW – Author's Craft – How does each author show or develop that shared idea?

2

NEW UNDERSTANDING – What new understanding do these excerpts create together?

3

Closure: Response Card

Exemplar response — color coded by move

Although the texts explore different stories, both Cain and Weiss suggest that self-doubt, isolation, and the pressure to conform are experiences that shape who a person becomes. Whereas Cain uses Carnegie's individual story as evidence for a broader cultural argument about identity and success, Weiss stays close to Bridges' personal experience and lets the story speak for itself. Together, these texts suggest that authentic success cannot be separated from struggle because the path toward finding one's voice requires moving through doubt, pressure, and uncertainty — not around them.

Leveled stems:

- Level 1: "Although the texts explore different stories, both Cain and Weiss suggest that ____."
- Level 2: "Whereas Cain ____, Weiss ____, which shows that ____."
- Level 3: "Together, these texts suggest that ____ because ____."

WE DO-NEW UNDERSTANDINGS

Set B — Identity: *Although society pressures people to perform an outward identity, Bridges insists that authentic identity cannot be taught — it must come from within.*

Set C — Self-Doubt: *Although both Carnegie and Bridges doubted whether they belonged, their self-doubt became the starting point for discovering who they truly were.*

Set D — Turning Point: *Because both Carnegie and Bridges met unexpected opportunities after years of struggle, their stories suggest that persistence creates the conditions for success.*