

Lesson 3: Reading

BEFORE YOU READ

Skim the article. Underline the title and the section headings. Then answer the question.

What is the article about? _____

READ

Read the article. Circle the names of two people who believe that the American dream is still alive.

Questioning the American Dream

Every year, thousands of hopeful newcomers come to the United States in search of a better life. They believe that with hard work and determination they will succeed and guarantee a better future for their children. They believe in the American dream: that anybody can achieve a goal if he or she works hard enough.

TOUGH TIMES

However, the American dream is more elusive than it once was. Statistics show that it is harder now than it ever was before for people to move from one economic class to the next. More Americans worry about having enough money to take care of their family, own their own home, educate their children, and enjoy their **retirement**.

Last month, we asked readers the question, "Is the American dream still alive?" Here are some of the replies.

STILL ALIVE

Barbara Montez, from Michigan, says: "The American dream is still alive! My father came here from El Salvador with nothing. His first job in the U.S. was as a janitor. After five years, he was able to

start his own company. That's the best example of the American dream that I know."

NOT FOR EVERYONE

Reader Paul Connors disagrees: "The American dream is certainly not alive for everyone. Poor people in the U.S. are struggling to **get by**. They work hard and have nothing left over." Yvette Weiss, writing from Des Moines, adds that success nowadays is more about contacts. "You have to be in the right place at the right time. It's who you know, not what you do."

FREEDOM TO DREAM

Many readers insisted that the American dream is not about **material success**. Brian Miller of California writes, "The American dream is the freedom to dream of possibilities. You have to be able to dream before you can begin to make your dream into a reality. In that sense, the American dream is still very much alive."



Reading Skill: Skimming

Before you read for complete understanding, skim (read quickly for a general idea). Look at the title, the heading of each section, and the illustrations or photos.