

## Before You Read

### *Toward a Rainbow Nation*

#### Connect to the Essay

Think about your friends and classmates. Do you know people who come from cultures that are different from your own? Do your closest friends have the same background as you do?

**List** Imagine that you have the chance to meet a new student from a different culture and visit his or her home. Make a list of things you would like to know about the student's culture.

#### Build Background

In this essay, a teenage girl tells about her school, her friends, and her everyday life in South Africa.

- South Africa is a nation at the southern tip of the continent of Africa.
- From 1948 to 1994 a law called apartheid set limits on the lives of people of different races in South Africa. The word *apartheid* means "separateness."
- In 1994 apartheid officially ended in South Africa.

#### Vocabulary

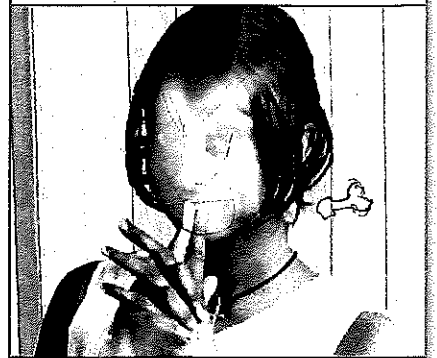
**obligation** (ob'lə gā'shən) *n.* something a person must do because of laws or duty (p. 558).

*Drivers have an obligation to obey stop signs.*

**optimistic** (op'tə mis'tik) *adj.* believing that things will turn out for the best; hopeful (p. 558).

*Amanda is optimistic that the weather will be warm and sunny for this weekend's picnic.*

#### Meet Lavendhri Pillay



**Young Author** Lavendhri Pillay was born and raised in South Africa. She was only thirteen when she wrote this essay. At that time, South Africa was just starting to let students of different races attend the same schools.

#### Many People in One Land

Pillay says that she loves living among people from many different backgrounds.



Literature Online

**Author Search** For more about Lavendhri Pillay, go to [glencoe.com](http://glencoe.com) and enter QuickPass code GL29763u4.

## Set Purposes for Reading

### BQ BIG Question

As you read, ask yourself, in what ways have Pillay's life experiences influenced her ideas about how people get along?

### Literary Element Author's Perspective

Authors, as people, have backgrounds—where they're from, what they believe, what they like and dislike. The elements of an author's background help create the viewpoint from which he or she writes. This viewpoint is the **author's perspective**.

It is important to pay attention to the author's perspective because it can influence the author's opinions. When you identify perspective in an essay, you can better understand why the author feels the way he or she does.

As you read, note the details of the author's background that could influence her perspective. Ask yourself, what connections are there between the author's perspective and her opinions?

### Reading Strategy Evaluate Argument

When you **evaluate an argument**, you make a judgment on how well an author is able to influence you. An effective argument should state a position clearly and have good reasons and examples that support it.

Evaluating an argument is important because it helps you think critically about an author's ideas. To evaluate an argument, look for some of the different appeals an author may use:

- a logical appeal with factual evidence, reasoned thought, and statistics
- an ethical appeal that addresses the reader's sense of right and wrong
- an emotional appeal that plays on feelings, such as fear or sympathy, to persuade the reader

As you read, identify Pillay's opinions and how she supports them. Then consider an opposing viewpoint for each opinion. Use a graphic organizer like the one below to evaluate Pillay's argument.

Pillay's Opinion	Her Support	Opposing Viewpoint

### Learning Objectives

For pages 553–560

In studying this text, you will focus on the following objectives:

**Literary Study:** Analyzing author's perspective.

**Reading:** Evaluating argument.

### TRY IT

**Evaluate** With a partner, choose a topic that you have different opinions about, such as a favorite food, a sport, or a hobby. Write a list of appeals and try to convince your partner to agree with you. Switch lists and decide how convincing your partner's appeals are. Is either of you persuaded to change your mind?

TOWARD A

# Rainbow Nation

Lavendhri Pillay

People ask me all the time, "What are you?" I say I'm South African. Then they say, "No-no-no, but what *are* you?" When I was small, I was always told that my great-grandfather came from India to pick sugarcane, but my family doesn't really have ties to India anymore. So I say, "I was born here, I've lived here my whole life, I don't know anything else, so I'm South African."

I've grown up different from a lot of other teenagers in South Africa because I've been subjected<sup>1</sup> to all different races and different kinds of people. I'm a really lucky person.

Since I was seven, I've gone to school at Sacred Heart, where everybody's completely mixed. We've got Coloured, black, British, Chinese, white, Indian, Afrikaans,<sup>2</sup> everybody. So from an early age I learned to accept these different people. In our school it's about what kind of reputation you make for yourself, what kind of person you are.

I've lived in Yeoville<sup>3</sup> most of my life with my mother, sister, and two brothers. It's a place where many cultures<sup>4</sup>



**Author's Perspective**  
How does being South African influence the author's perspective?

<sup>1</sup> Here, **subjected** means "exposed to."

<sup>2</sup> Under the apartheid laws, a person of more than one race was called **coloured**. South Africa was once a British colony, and this is the British spelling. The **Afrikaans** are descendants of the Dutch settlers who moved to South Africa in the 1600s.

<sup>3</sup> **Yeoville** (yō'vil) is a part of the city of Johannesburg where people of different races live in the same neighborhoods.

<sup>4</sup> **Cultures** are groups of people who share a history or a way of life.

live. It's really nice living here because you get to find out about people and what their lives are like. You're not judging them; you can actually get to know what's going on with them. People in Yeoville don't care about what you look like; people are just themselves.

I have a really big group of friends, and within that group we have the whole country. But there's never been any weirdness between us at all. We aren't black, white, Indian, or Coloured; we're just us. We don't actually look at anybody's race; it's just, "Hey, you're my friend, you're a nice person, I like you."

We do regular teenage things together. We gossip a lot like normal girls, and on the weekends we sleep over at each other's houses and phone people and find out what they've been doing. We talk about music; we go to the movies; we swim.

Because we're mixed, we're more powerful; we get to learn from each other. If I were to be in a completely Indian community, it would always be the same things. But when I visit my friends' homes, I see differences in their settings, and all of our families deal with things totally differently. It's always a learning experience.

I've also been to Soweto and Eldorado Park [a Coloured township near Johannesburg] many times, and I've been able to see what other people are actually going through. It's good for me to see that I'm not the only person on earth and that not everybody lives like me. I've been able to grow up with everything I need. If I didn't see those places, I would think that everybody had normal houses and enough money to do what they wanted like I do. Then I think I'd be quite small-minded.



**Evaluate Argument** What kind of appeal does the author use here to support her argument?

**Author's Perspective** What perspective on her own life does the author gain from visiting Soweto and Eldorado Park?

A lot of our parents call my friends and me the rainbow nation. I think it makes them feel good to see us together; it's kind of like what everybody should be like racial-wise, how people should interact with each other, but don't. When our parents were small, they had apartheid, they didn't have the opportunity to mix, and I'm sure they envy us for having all of the new experiences that they never would have even dreamed of having when they were young.

But as a nation I don't think we can call ourselves the rainbow people yet. Most South Africans are still completely trapped in apartheid mentally. I've had a lot of experiences with racism, like at this restaurant when the people there wouldn't serve us because of our color. Everybody else got up and left when we came in, and then it took half an hour for the waiter to come serve us and then an hour to get our breakfast.

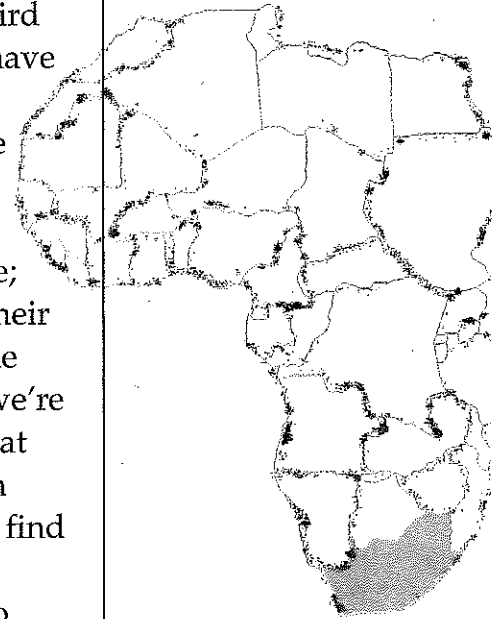
Even though apartheid's not law anymore, it's still alive. People still divide themselves into these cliques:<sup>5</sup> black, Coloured, Indian, white. Like when my friends and I go to the mall, we notice that other people give us really weird looks. I think it's because we're so mixed, and others have been raised with this wall blocking them. They're like, Wow, what's wrong with that group? How can they be comfortable with each other?

I think it's good for people to see us, because it's showing them that you can have fun with another race; it's not abnormal. People need to see that aside from their cultural differences and their skin color, we all need the same basics: We all need to breathe, drink water, eat; we're all exactly the same. They should just look beyond what they've been taught, they should try and have an open mind about things. Most South Africans will probably find this very difficult, but it's definitely worth it.

If someone did come up to us and say she wanted to mix, we'd say, "All right, come join us!" If she was scared, I'd say, "I know it might be difficult because you haven't done it before, but all you have to do is think about what kind of people they are and not what they look like. Try

#### Evaluate Argument

What kind of appeal does the author use to support her claim that racism still exists?



<sup>5</sup> **Cliques** are groups of people who leave others out.



*View the Photograph* In what way does this photograph help you understand Pillay's perspective?

closing your eyes and talking to them, and then you'll get used to them and eventually you won't think about where they're from. You'll learn to appreciate people for who and what they are, to see past everything."

I think people my age should learn about apartheid because it is our past, it's our parents and our grandparents, it affects

us. If we know the history of our country, we'll be able to know what was wrong about what people did, and not to do it again.

But at the same time, I think we should be making a future. We can't just get stuck in one place, always staying on the same subject. My generation was lucky enough to not have been part of the struggle against apartheid, to have been only young when elections happened; we've grown up in other times when race is no longer governed by law, no longer an **obligation**. That gives us the freedom to address anything. We need to learn how to move on, to look at other issues that affect us, to try and do better, more different things. Our generation is more open-minded than our parents', and this makes me **optimistic** about this country. Since it's up to us, I think we can change things. ✎

#### Vocabulary

**obligation** (ob'le gā'shən) *n.* something a person must do because of laws or duty  
**optimistic** (op'tə mis'tik) *adj.* believing that things will turn out for the best; hopeful

#### BQ BIG Question

Do you think the author could persuade a shy person to mix with a wide variety of people?

## After You Read

### Respond and Think Critically

1. How does the author feel about the diversity at her school? Explain. [Recall]
2. Why does the author's group of friends get along so well? Include details from the essay to support your answer. [Analyze]
3. Why do you think some people in South Africa still divide themselves into separate groups even though apartheid isn't the law? Support your answer with details from the essay. [Interpret]
4. Why does the author believe that having an open mind about race is "definitely worth it"? Explain. [Infer]
5. What effect does the author think apartheid has had on her generation? Explain. [Analyze]
6. **BQ** **BIG Question** What does the author want her generation to do to make South Africa a "rainbow nation"? [Conclude]

### Vocabulary

Choose the sentence that uses the vocabulary word correctly.

- A. While driving her mother's car, Anne thought it was her **obligation** to be careful and drive safely.
- B. Anne received her **obligation** when she passed her driving test last week.
- A. The coach is sure our football team will lose tomorrow because he is an **optimistic** person.
- B. Because the coach is **optimistic**, he is telling everyone the football team will win the championship this year.

### Academic Vocabulary

When the author writes that she calls herself South African, she describes part of her **identity**. In the preceding sentence, *identity* means "the personality of an individual." Think about your identity. What characteristics and experiences make up your identity?

### TIP

#### Analyzing

When you analyze an essay, you look at separate parts of the essay in order to understand the whole.

- Reread details the author gives about her group of friends.
- Review positive and negative statements the author makes about South Africa's diversity, cliques, and her own experiences of friendship.
- Put together this information to decide why the author's group of friends get along well.

#### FOLDABLES Study Organizer

Keep track of your ideas about the **BIG Question** in your unit Foldable.



Literature Online

#### Selection Resources

For Selection Quizzes, eFlashcards, and Reading-Writing Connection activities, go to [glencoe.com](http://glencoe.com) and enter QuickPass code GL29763u4.



### Literary Element Author's Perspective

1. Describe the author's experiences with different groups of people. How have her experiences affected her perspective on race in her country?
2. What is the author's perspective on whether apartheid still exists in South Africa? Explain.

### Review: Author's Purpose

As you learned on page 211, an **author's purpose** is his or her intention in written work. An author's purpose may be to tell a story, to inform or explain, to entertain, or to persuade. An author may have more than one purpose in a piece of writing.

3. What do you think is the author's purpose in "Toward a Rainbow Nation"?

### Reading Strategy Evaluate Argument

4. The author believes that her generation should learn about apartheid. What reasons does the author provide to support her opinion? Explain.
5. Does the author support the argument that her generation needs to address issues in South Africa other than race? Explain, using details from your graphic organizer to support your answer.

### Grammar Link

**Main and Subordinate Clauses** A **main clause** (also called an independent clause) has a subject and predicate and can stand alone as a sentence.

Pillay is a good writer

A **subordinate clause** (also known as a dependent clause) has a subject and a predicate but does not express a complete thought. A subordinate clause begins with a **subordinating conjunction**.

because she supports her ideas

Below are some common subordinating conjunctions.

after	since
although	though
because	until
before	when
if	where

**Practice** Look for two sentences in "Toward a Rainbow Nation" that contain main and subordinate clauses. Underline the main clause once and the subordinate clause twice. Then write two new sentences with main and subordinate clauses and subordinating conjunctions.

### Speaking and Listening

**Speech** Write a speech to persuade members of your school community to take action and bring students together. First, explain the problem, using examples to convince your listeners of the problem. Then give reasons why it is important to bring students together. Use an appeal to persuade your listeners to accomplish this goal. Finally, explain what actions students and staff can take to bring students together.