

# KQED Perspectives Unit Curriculum

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## PREWRITING

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### Lesson 2: “So What?”

Objective:

- Students will use the question “So what?” to help refine their topics.

Estimated time: One 50-minute class period

Recommended Perspective models:

- The San Francisco School: “My Mixed Emotions and My Adoption” by Jackson and “Breast Cancer” by Yma at <http://www.kqed.org/radio/programs/perspectives/sfschoolproject.jsp>
- Youth Radio: “Last Holiday” by Joshua Raifman at <http://www.youthradio.org/news/last-holiday>

Steps:

1. I start this lesson by introducing “The Rule of So What,” adapted from Nancie Atwell’s Lessons That Change Writers at <http://www.lessonsthatchangewriters.com>. This helps students to focus on their purpose for writing about the topic, and helps to address the question of why someone else would care about this topic. It’s also a catchy phrase that students can latch onto. We listen to another Perspective example and try and find the “So what?” in that piece.
2. Students then are asked to answer the question “So what?” in response to their chosen Perspective topic. In pairs, they tell their partner everything they want to say about their topic. The partner then asks, in a kind and helpful tone, “So what?” The author responds with why this topic is important to them and why it might be important to their audience. I model this conversation with my own Perspective topic.
3. Based on how this conversation goes, students may want to choose a topic that is more meaningful, or relevant to their audience. Once this topic is finalized, students brainstorm, creating a list or web of everything they can think of related to this topic. For students who struggle with this, I may even have them draw a picture of a character or an event. Students will do more formal outlining later-- this exercise is designed to help them develop their topics more fully.

