

**Learning objective: To think about the idea of the American Dream and what it might mean.**

**Starter:**

Hand out the attached resource sheet, 'What is most important in life?' and give students a few minutes to rank the statements. Discuss the order in which students have ranked the statements and why they have chosen the positions they have. Have students ranked the statements fairly similarly or differently? There is no wrong or right answer – we are just trying to see if we all strive for the same goals.

**Introduction:**

Put the words 'American Dream' on the board and ask students for any words that they might associate with this phrase. What is the American Dream?

Decide on a joint definition of the phrase.

**Development:**

Hand out the photos taken at the time of the American Depression (easily available on the internet). Students should make two columns in their books and write down positive words and images to describe USA in the photos and in the other they should write down all the negative words and images. For example, in the positive column they might write 'opportunity' and in the negative column they might write 'barren landscape'. In one column they might write 'cars' and in the other 'shacks'.

**Plenary:**

Get each student to read out one word or phrase from each column so that we can make a comprehensive list on the board. Students should write down any words they have not included in their lists. We should now have a good starting point to think about the contradictions of the American Dream and how it might affect people's lives.

<b>What is most important in life?</b>
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Look at the following and rank them according to how important they are to you. There are no wrong or right answers:

Statement	How important it is to me (put a 1 for the most important, through to 10 for the least important)
<b>Friends</b>	
<b>Education</b>	
<b>Family</b>	
<b>Big house</b>	
<b>Fast car</b>	
<b>Good school</b>	
<b>Having a lot of money</b>	
<b>Wearing designer clothes</b>	
<b>Being famous</b>	
<b>Freedom</b>	

Now think about why you have ranked the statements in the order you have. Why is one thing so important to you and why does something else have such little importance?