

After reading *The Changing Face of America*, use the cluster diagram to generate ideas about the prompt and the focus tree to organize them.

Is there a common value and belief system in the United States, or has the concept of American unity simply always been a myth? Use details from the following as well as examples from your personal life, experiences and knowledge to support your answer.

When the United States won its independence from Great Britain, it was a nation of great diversity. It attracted immigrants from all over Europe. There were also many forced immigrants and slaves from the Caribbean and African countries. There was no single language, common history or religion.

However, in any U.S. History classroom, you would think there was a great deal of uniformity in the country in its early days. The diverse character of early America is washed over. Look closely and you will find that what it means to be American differed then, as now, among separate ethnic groups. We have not always agreed; in fact, we have often clashed violently.

How do we explain what it means to be an America when there is such a long history of division among us? In recent years, many have noted that the face of America is changing. While in 1783, approximately 90 percent of the population was white, in 2010 only about 40 percent fit that description. Also, more than 75 percent practiced Protestant religions in 1783, but the 2010 census tells us that less than 50 percent of Americans now identify with those faiths. Another 35 percent think of themselves as Catholic, 10 percent are Buddhists, and 5 percent practice Islam. Language has also undergone great changes. In 1783 about 60 percent of the population spoke English, with 30 percent speaking German and the remaining residents speaking a variety of other languages. In 2010, 55 percent spoke English as their first language with Spanish as a first language rising to almost 40 percent.

VOCABULARY

THE CHANGING FACE OF AMERICA

Independence - Freedom

Nation - Country

Diversity - Variety

Immigrants - Settlers

Uniformity - Sameness

Character - Charm

Differed - Changed

Ethnicity – Background; Culture; Origin

Clashed - Fought

Division - Separation

Approximately - Nearly

Population - Inhabitants

Description – Portrayal

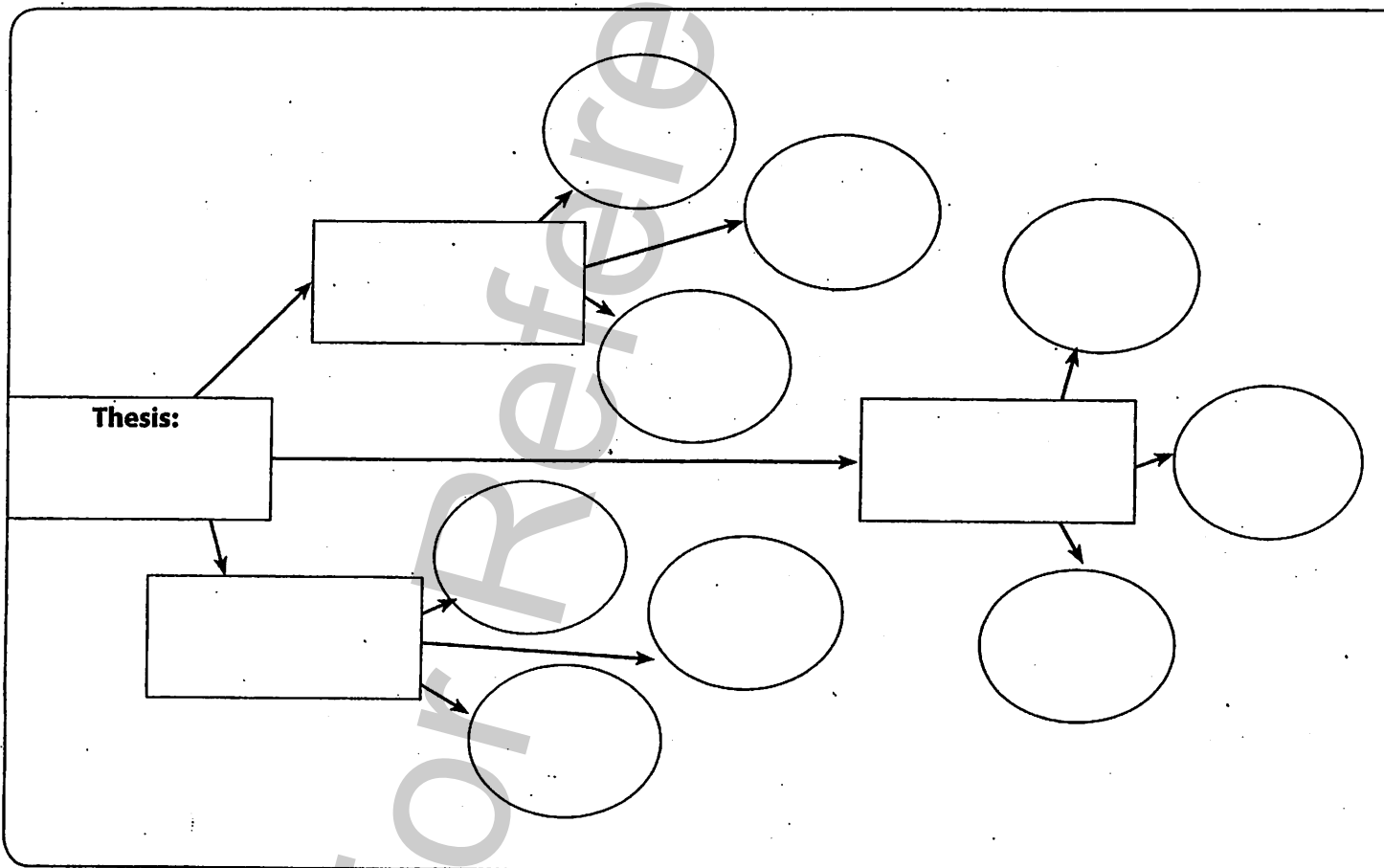
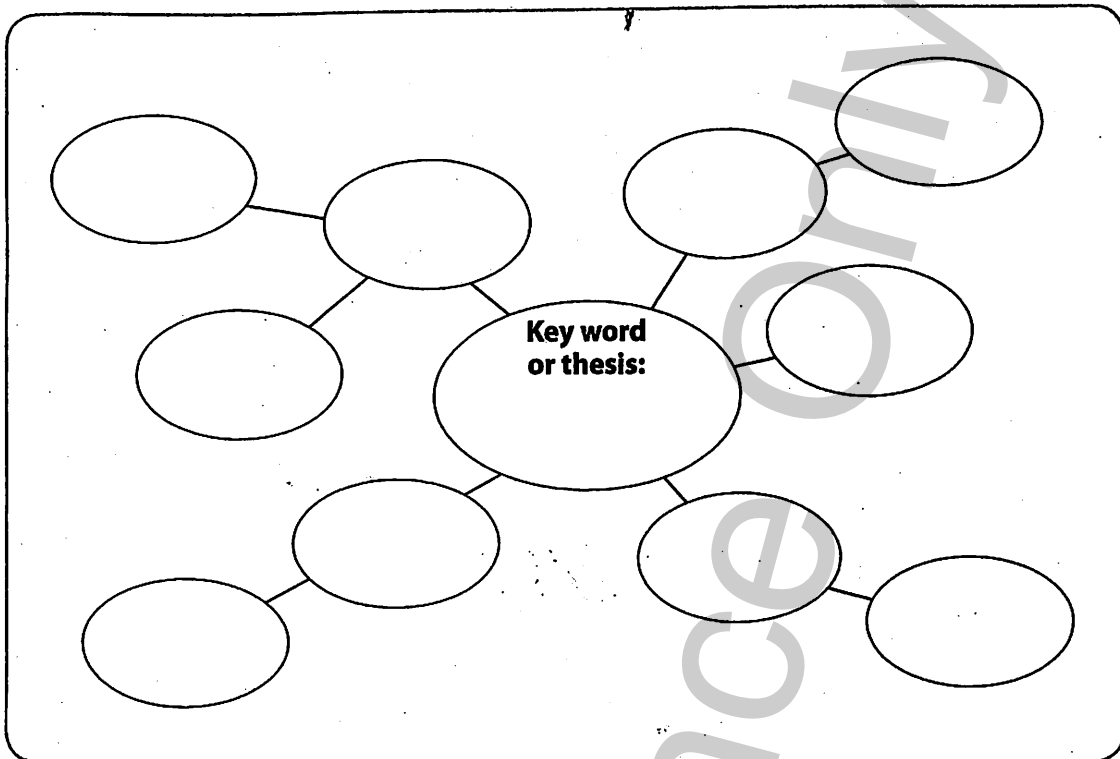
Native - Inborn

Protestant – Christian religion

Catholic – Universal Christian religion

Buddhists – Middle Eastern religion

Islam – Muslim religion



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