

# Building Empathy

**With Student Stories**

Greg Dowden - CADA Tours 2022

# Mr. Dowden Minute...



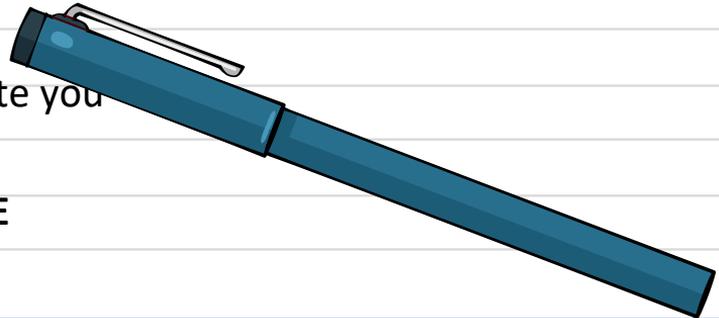
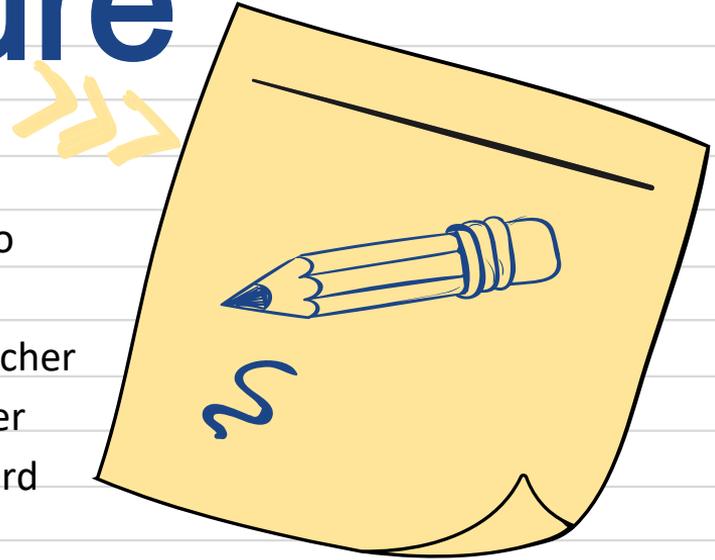
- Greg Dowden
- Husband, Father, Teacher, Mentor, Traveler, and Writer
- 5 years at Vista Murrieta High School
- 2 Years as Activities Director
- 3 Years as PLUS Advisor
- Currently teach Modern World History, PLUS, Mentorship Intervention, and ELD Coordinator
- Advise Polynesian Culture Club, Middle Eastern North African Club, Native American Student Alliance, and Together We Can
- Changemakers



**Activities  
for  
the  
Classroom**

# The BIG Picture

1. Each person has their own marker.
2. Form small groups at random.
3. Choose how to order the small groups (oldest to youngest, grade level, height, etc.)
4. Line up each small group at a piece of blank butcher paper, with only the first person facing the paper and everyone else with their backs turned toward the paper.
5. Give each person 30 seconds to draw on or add to the drawing and then rotate.
6. Keep time. Stop at random. Have the teammate you stopped at present the drawing.
7. **DEBRIEF - WOULD YOU HAVE PRESENTED THE SAME WAY?**





## The Setup

Talk about what values are and how they influence our actions.

- Divide students into groups of 2-4.
- Have students each share their top five values in their small groups.
- Have students determine which values they shared that they have in common.
- Have each group pick one value that represents them.



# Value Mascots

## The Assignment

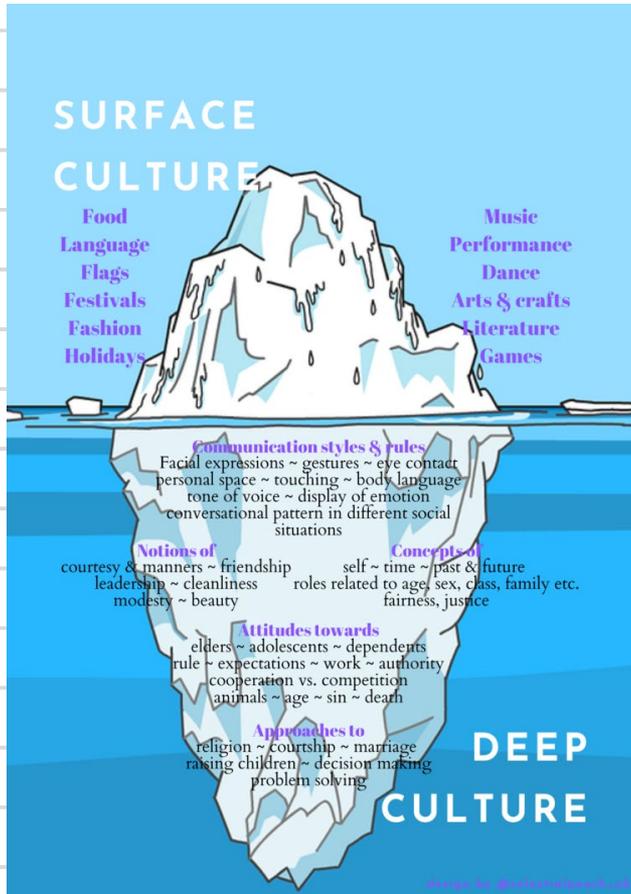
Have each group draw or create a mascot based on their top value.

The Mascot should be an animal or symbol. It should not be a person, culture, or profession.

Have the student group present their finished mascot and how it represents their chosen value.



# My Culture Box



## The Setup

Talk about what Culture is and how it shapes and influences our worldview, values, and beliefs. You can use the Culture Iceberg to facilitate conversation.

## Assignment-

Have students create a virtual Culture Box that they will share with the class.

7 slides: [Template Link Here](#)

1. The person I see in the mirror...
2. The person my family sees.
3. My Heritage
4. My traditions, rituals, and celebrations
5. Family Recipe
6. The person my friends see...
7. The person I want to become...

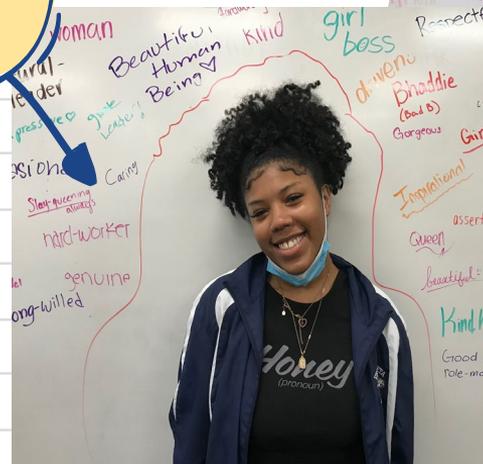
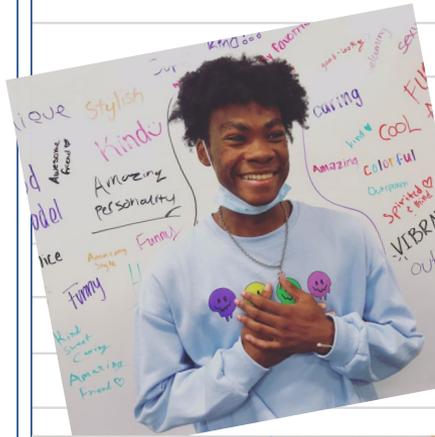
# Positive Message Posts

Have a student sit in the “hot seat” with their back facing the whiteboard.

Have their classmates come and write positive messages about them on the board

behind them.

Post it on your Social Media.



# Tune-in Tuesday



Every Tuesday one student shares a song that is meaningful to them and why. They should have the lyrics printed or on the screen and be prepared to answer questions about what they shared.



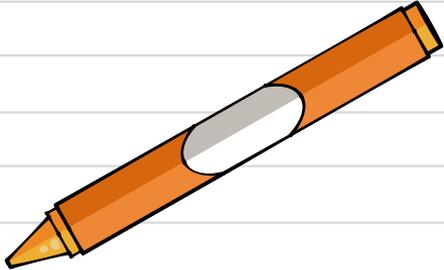


**Telling  
Stories in  
2 minutes  
or less**



01

# Your Voice Matters



A Challenge for Student  
Leaders

# Video Storytelling: A Challenge for Student Leaders.

## The Setup

Talk about how everyone has a story worth sharing and how sharing stories inspires empathy.

Assign student leaders the task of creating a video confessional that will be edited down into an inspirational PSA.

## Instructions:

Remember, speak to the camera as if you are talking to someone brand new. If you mess up you can just keep recording. Speak slowly and clearly. Don't rush this. Tell your story and your truths.

## Theme: Your Voice Matters

1. State your name and grade.

2. Tell me a story about yourself that could inspire, uplift, or catch someone's interest.

Examples: "My family moved to this country..." or "Something that I used to struggle with is..." or "You might not know this about me but..."

The story can be about overcoming something, reaching out for help, a demonstration of strength, something you are proud that you accomplished, a unique adventure you had.

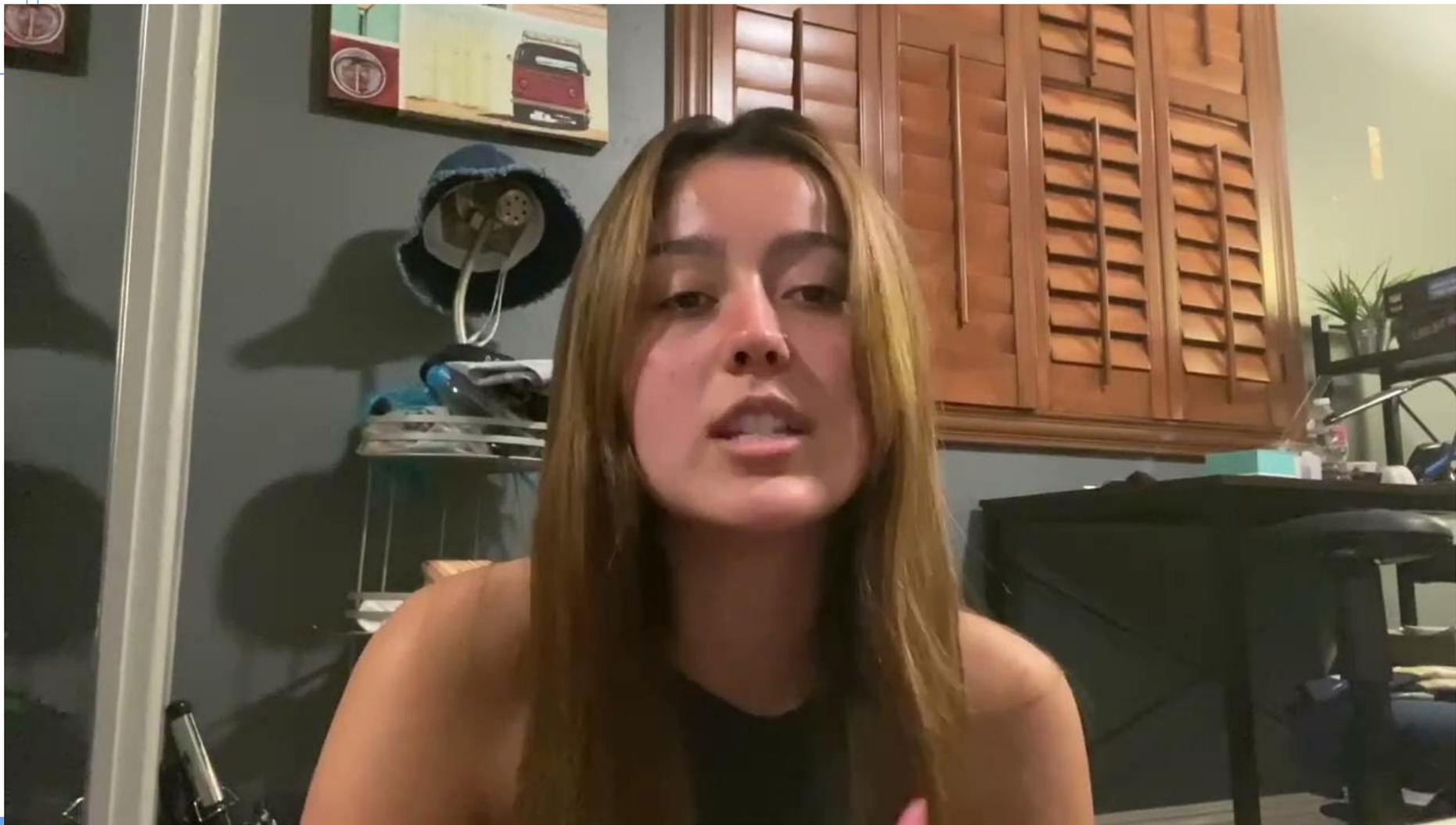
5. Tell me about a lesson you learned or a motto you try to live by.

6. What advice or guidance would you give a new friend.

7. End with the prompt -

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I want to use my voice to...

Your Voice Matters!

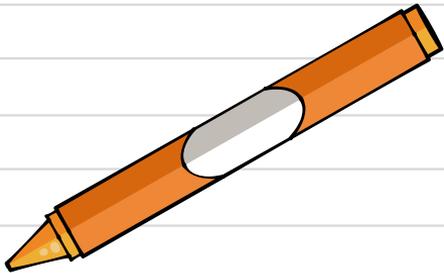






02

# Student Spotlights



Reaching Out to Spotlight  
Others

# Student Spotlights

## The Setup

Have your student leaders go out and interview students on campus or ask them for confessional style videos.

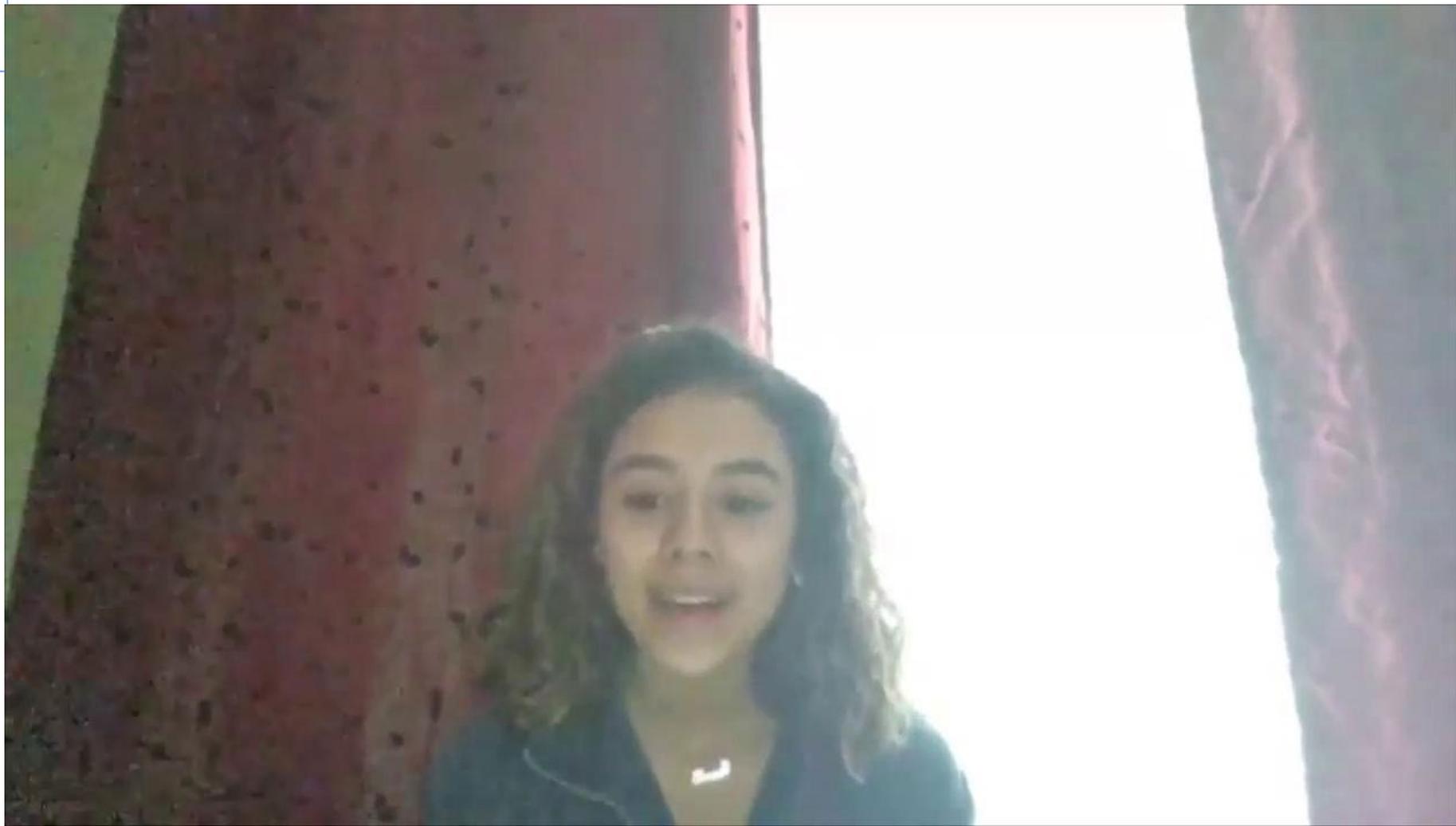
### Instructions:

Remember, speak to the camera as if you are talking to someone brand new. If you mess up you can just keep recording. Speak slowly and clearly. Don't rush this. Tell your story and your truths.

Have the student Introduce themselves as if you were speaking to a new friend or new person.

Include:

- Name
- Grade
- Interests & Hobbies
- Things they love (food, music, books, etc - be specific)
- Optional Catch Phrase at end

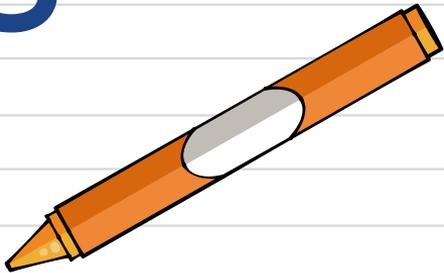






03

# ART SPOTLIGHTS



Another way to tell  
stories is through art.

# Art Spotlights

## The Setup

Have your student leaders come up with a topic and 5 questions to ask various artists on campus.

### Instructions:

Remember, speak to the camera as if you are talking to someone brand new. If you mess up you can just keep recording. Speak slowly and clearly. Don't rush this. Tell your story and your truths.

1. How did you get involved in your art medium?
2. Why do you enjoy making art?
3. How has art benefitted you?
4. Why might you recommend others getting into art?
5. Do you have any main influences for your art? If so, who or what?





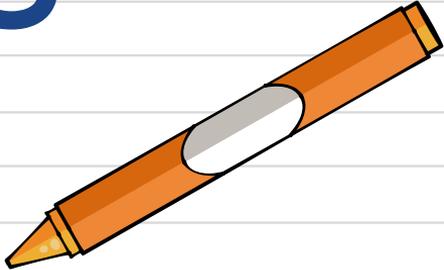
04



# CULTURE SPOTLIGHTS



Sharing Culture helps  
share stories.



# Culture Spotlights

## The Setup

Have your student leaders come up with a topic and 5 questions to ask various students on campus.

### Instructions:

Remember, speak to the camera as if you are talking to someone brand new. If you mess up you can just keep recording. Speak slowly and clearly. Don't rush this. Tell your story and your truths.

1. What cultures do you identify with?
2. What was your experience growing up with your culture?
3. What are some traditions/celebrations you participate in that are unique to your culture?
4. What is an important moment or event from your culture that has impacted you?
5. What do you want other people to know about your culture?



**CELEBRATE  
CULTURE**

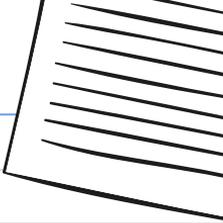




**Podcasts**

# VMHS PLUS

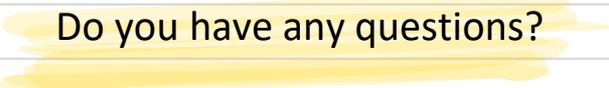
Sometimes giving kids the right prompt and letting them have the conversation can become a powerful tool.



# Thanks!



@unkogreg



Do you have any questions?



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Vista Murrieta High School

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