Placing Authors in Conversation

For Paper 2, the objective is to argue for a greater understanding or realization that comes out of putting two texts in conversation with one another. Each text on its own would not lead to this understanding; only through the engagement of *both* texts can you achieve this important insight. Before you can reach that insight (which will serve as your *claim*), however, you will want to clearly establish **the grounds for comparison** between the two texts. What shared theme do they have in common, and what is their comparative relationship? This will help you begin thinking about interesting ways that the two texts may "converse" with one another.

Potential comparative relationships between texts:
- Cause and effect (one essay describes a situation that leads to effects or results in the second essay)
- Problem and resolution (one essay introduces a problem or issue for which the second essay offers a potential resolution)
- Theory/concept and example (one essay introduces a theory or concept for which the second essay provides an example or illustration—commonly referred to as a *lens* relationship)
- Shared issue up for debate (both essays assert unique argumentative positions on the same issue up for debate)
- Shared thematic discussion (both essays discuss their unique perspectives on the same theme or topic)

NOTE: Your establishment of the comparative relationship and grounds for comparison is not an argument; it is an essential step in developing your comparative argument.

Homework Exercise:
Use the two sample sentences below as models to help you **place at least 3 different pairings of authors in conversation** and establish their comparative relationships (grounds for comparison) based on their thematic connection. Note: Texts that are less likely to be paired (due to obviously different primary topics) are often the ones that produce the most interesting and surprising comparative arguments! Handwrite or type your sentences and be prepared to share and discuss in class.

> **SAMPLE 1:**   *Sharma's anecdotes could intensify Leonard's fear that minority languages are becoming extinct due to the spread of English as a global language.*

> **SAMPLE 2:**   *Traves and Boroditsky could have an interesting discussion about how language connects to culture and how learning a new language can affect how we think.*