

The Search for a Sense of Self

Our first unit is exploring the idea of identity. We're going to be examining these large, philosophical questions:

- Who and what are we?
- What does it mean to be a human being?
- What is human nature?
- Do we see ourselves the same way that others see us?
- How does being the member of a particular group affect our identity and sense of self?
- What is our purpose for being?

When looking at philosophical questions, there aren't any real answers to these questions. These questions are meant as jumping off points for discussion and a guide to the literature we will study. These questions have been asked for millennia, as a part of human experience. People throughout history have searched for where they belong and a purpose for being alive.

In our first unit, we will attempt to examine different perspectives and takes on these questions.

"The Danger of a Single Story" – Chimamanda Adichie

http://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=en

Answer the following questions as you are watching the video:

- 1) What is a single story?
- 2) Why is a single story dangerous?
- 3) What does she mean when she quotes Mourid Barghouti "if you want to dispossess a people, the simplest way to do it is to tell their story and to start with, 'secondly'"?
- 4) Identify a single story within contemporary Canadian culture, going as narrow as Regina.

We will discuss the answers as a class. It is important that you have an understanding of the ideas presented in the video, as they form the basis for your assignment.

A Single Story is Rewritten

Your Task:

Your job is to now create a representation of a single story of a country or culture in the world and how that country or culture is a multi-narrative place/being.

Integral to your completion of this task is the understanding of the country or culture's single story. Reflect back on Chimamanda Adichie's examples in the TED Talk. If you can't remember, the link has been provided above.

Before you begin, you will fill out the contract provided with the **proposal** of the country or culture you wish to examine. (**NOTE:** there will be one country or culture per assignment. Doubles of a country or culture are not allowed. There are many, many, many choices available to you)

You will complete this task individually or in groups of **no more** than three.

There will be a written portion and a visual portion. If you are in a group, you will decide how the work will be split equitably in the contract (provided) and this will be submitted to Ms Lenihan.

You will share a group mark for both portions of the assignment, so it is imperative you communicate with one another and ensure you have input on the final product. There will be a group (and individual) - assessment that will be completed at the end of the assignment.

Written Task:

You will develop and articulate a defensible position on individual, community, national, and world views of single stories, as related to your country or culture.

In your written work, you will explain the country or culture's single story, as it relates to both a global perspective (how the world views that country or culture) and an internal perspective (how that country or culture views itself). Ensure that you are explaining how this country or culture is more than a single story.

Requirements:

- Typed, as per the requirements in the syllabus and first page handout
- 1000-1500 words
- Introduction, body, and conclusion paragraphs
- MLA formatted bibliography
- Formal, academic language

Visual Task:

You will develop a visual representation of what you have discussed in your written work.

Your visual will be split in two: a representation of the single story of your country or culture and the multiple narratives within that country or culture that counter the single story.

CR B30.1; CR B30.2; CR B30.3; CC B30.1 (a, b, d); CC B30.2 (a, c, d)

Requirements:

- On Bristol board (ask Ms Lenihan, if you need some. **DO NOT** get Bristol board from the art room)
- At least 10 images per side (20 images in total)
 - You must cite each image source, if it is not your image
- Titles for each side that makes it clear which is the single story and which is the multiple narrative
 - You may choose your own wording – **be creative**

Reflection:

Before you hand your assignment in, each group member will complete a reflection on the assignment. The reflection is attached.

NOTE:

You are asked to explore single stories about a country or culture. As Chimamanda Adichie discussed in her video, single stories can be a synonym for stereotypes. You will be respectful when exploring stereotypes of your country or culture. The purpose of this assignment is to dispel single stories, not reinforce them.

You will have time in the library from September 9th until the 17th. This time is to complete all portions of the assignment. You may, of course, choose to bring your own technology.

September 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, and 17: library lab (at the back)

September 11: library a (laptop carts)

DUE DATE: _____

RECAP:

You need to hand in:

- 1) Learning Contract
- 2) Written Assignment
- 3) Visual Assignment
- 4) Group/Individual Assessment
- 5) Reflection
- 6) Rubrics