English IV

Mrs. Sherry Brown

Cultural Autobiography Presentation Assignment

Your task is to develop an understanding of your cultural identity by exploring all aspects of who you are. You will want to consider all of the categories listed on the Aspects of Culture handout, although you almost certainly will not include all of them in your Cultural Autobiography presentation. It might be helpful to categorize yourself, using the Aspects of Culture, as a starting point. Then, consider the following:

Which of these aspects of culture are immutable? In other words, what things change as you mature (such as age and perhaps even religion), and which stay the same (such as ethnicity)?

Has your family recently moved from one category to another? For example, were your parents in a low socio-economic category, but moved into a middle upper class category through hard work or inheritance? How has that affected you?

Are you a minority in terms of any of these categories? Consider both your peers, your community, and your family. For example, are you in a lower socio-economic category than most of your peers at TMI? Do you have religious beliefs that are different from your other family members? Is your ethic group a minority in your neighborhood? Or is your race a majority in your neighborhood, but a minority in the rest of the region? How does that affect your self-identity?

Sometimes a life-changing event is part of your cultural identity, particularly if that event impinges upon one of the cultural categories. For example, 9-11 had a huge impact on Muslims living in this country.

Consider the things that you hold dear, the beliefs you have, the pastimes that you enjoy, the things that you fear. These are components of your cultural identity. Look back at the iceberg visual that was handed out. Think about some of the things that are not visible, such as your opinions about handling emotions or how to raise children. What factors have contributed to your beliefs?

**For your Cultural Autobiography presentation, you will develop a visual component and write an accompanying script.** The visual portion can be a PowerPoint presentation, or it can be a physical representation of your cultural identity. **You should have 8-10 images that represent your identity**. Be sure that this component is visual – in other words, if you use PowerPoint, do not have slides with text. The slides should be pictures, images, or artwork. Go beyond just the obvious aspects of your identity. For example, if you want to express your ethnicity, don’t just state what your ethnic identity is; share how that identity has shaped you.

You also will write a script to accompany the visual component. **You have 12-15 minutes for your presentation.** You will need to practice your presentation. At 15 minutes, your presentation will end, whether you have finished or not.

There are some aspects of your cultural identity that you may not want to share with the class. You may not be comfortable talking about your religious beliefs, for example. Choose the elements of your culture which are most important to you, but which you are comfortable talking about.

**You will also turn in a MLA formatted works cited page.** It is almost certain that you will need to go to some outside sources in order to research your culture. Even if it is just an interview with your mom, you should get used to documenting all of your sources. If you get photographs from the internet, cite those as well.

**Your script, visual component, and works cited page are due by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,** even if you don’t present on that day. Email your script to me; be sure that it does not have grammatical or spelling errors. If your visual component can be emailed (for example, if it is a PowerPoint), then email it as well. If it is something physical that you have created, take a picture of it and email the photo of it to me.

If you want to bring in something supplemental to your presentation, then check with me. If there is a traditional dish that you want to cook, or if you want to dress in a traditional costume, let me know.

Rubric:

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| *category* | *criteria* |
| **ACCURACY** | * presentation fulfills all requirements of the assignment * 8-12 visuals * presentation takes 12-15 minutes * presentation goes beyond simple listing of cultural characteristics * written script, free of grammatical errors, is submitted * MLA formatted works cited page is submitted |
| **PRESENTATION** | * oral portion of presentation shows evidence of rehearsal and preparation * comfortable pacing * voice is strong and easily heard and understood * eye contact * well organized presentation * points are clearly communicated * keeps the audience’s interest * visual and oral portions of presentation are well-integrated * nervousness is contained and does not detract from presentation * presenter does not apologize for or demean his/her culture or the culture of others |
| **CREATIVITY** | * visual portion of presentation is appealing * visual portion of presentation shows evidence of innovative thinking * presentation provides good insight into presenter’s cultural identity * presenter is willing to share compelling aspects of his/her culture * presenter is able to make strong connections between his content and the audience * if necessary, presenter handles rescheduling of presentation or technical glitches with aplomb |