

## **Danger of a Single Story: an essay for the 21st century**

For this essay, you will write an expository essay that requires you to conduct research and to think deeply about an example of a single story that is held widely. Remember that a single story is one-sided. A single story takes a one-dimensional view of a complex reality that, if it is to be understood completely, must be examined from all angles and perspectives.

You may examine:

a person	an age
a religion (or lack thereof) and its followers	a social class
a country	issues related to immigration
an ethnicity	a commonly held stereotype

An expository essay requires you to **write objectively**, to suss out precise information, and to present the information thoughtfully.

- Your essay will be five paragraphs.
- You will use no fewer than three sources, and those sources must include at least one scholarly piece (which can be found on library databases). Be careful and thoughtful about all of your sources.

### **Your body paragraphs should do the following things:**

First, understand and explain the story, its origin, its function (why is it put forth as a reality? who does it benefit? how does it force perceptions of others and inform people's self-definition?), and its impact on the larger society.

Second, find and explain alternatives to the single story. Provide verified examples of alternative perspectives. This may include personal narratives from those who do not conform to the single story, accurate historical information that contradicts or adds to the single story, and/or data that provides illuminating facts.

Thirdly, suggest ways that people can change the single story on a small, personal scale and how society can change the story on a broader scale. In this paragraph, you may identify organizations that are already starting the work of changing the story, or you may suggest ways that governments can address the issues. But do not forget that individuals also need to participate in actively seeking and celebrating balanced stories. Explore ways that people can make changes individually.

**You will present your essay for a public speaking quiz grade. That grade will be a simple 0-5 scale with:**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 0 = no presentation                        | 3 = mostly clear/prepared presentation |
| 1 = unclear/unprepared presentation        | 4 = skilled, prepared presentation     |
| 2 = mostly unclear/unprepared presentation | 5 = expert presentation                |