

Grade10 Unit 1 EA 1 Writing about Cultural Identity

Score: Exemplary

What is my culture? Do I even have one? I've asked myself these questions about a million times. In the essay Ethnic Hash, it says, "What were the flavors, accents, and linguistic trail that were passed down to me over the ages? What were the habits, customs, and common traits of the social group by which I have been guided in life?" Just like the girl who wrote Ethnic Hash, I have been struggling trying to find out what my culture is. From the outside, I seem pretty average. I look American and have a slight southern accent, but down here who doesn't? Everyone has a culture, sometimes it's just hard to recognize it when you're living in the middle of it. Have you ever heard the expression, "You are what you eat"? This holds true for me, I am what I eat. And I don't mean I'm going to turn into mocha frappuccino with no whip cream from Starbucks. The foods I eat are an exact representation of my culture. My whole family likes to cook, including me. I eat a lot of different things and they all represent different parts of my culture.

One element of my culture can be represented my mawmaw's cooking, the very southern part. I am really close to my grandparents, they are my neighbors and I spend a lot of time with them. So we eat a lot of meals together, sometimes we'll go out to dinner but most of the time someone is cooking. My parents and my grandma take turns. My grandma cooks very southern cuisine, which translates to very unhealthy, but it is so delicious. Everything she cooks is phenomenal, from shrimp and grits to bread pudding. Food also ties into my family's traditions. Ever since I was little, on Sundays my family has gone to 7:30 mass at our church and then gone and ate breakfast at my grandparents' house. Every single Sunday we have the same thing-homemade biscuits, gravy, eggs, sausage, bacon. And each member of my family is a part of breakfast. My mawmaw makes the biscuits, my dad fries the eggs, my pawpaw fries the bacon and

cooks the sausage, and my mom and my sisters set the table. I am asked to set the table, to make the gravy, and to help my mawmaw make the biscuits. We have a good system. It is the highlight of my week, we get to catch up with my grandparents while eating delicious food. My mawmaw makes something special for every occasion; peach cobbler for my pawpaw's birthday, satin pie for my dad's birthday, and shrimp jambalaya when my aunts come into town. The food my grandmother cooks represents a part of my culture because it represents the time spent with my grandparents and who they are. And being with my grandparents has definitely influenced who I am.

Another part of my culture can be shown through the foods my dad makes. My dad also really likes to cook, especially grill. He cooks great steaks, makes drunk chicken, and killer burgers. My dad also likes to work with seafood, he always cooks something good for my aunts when they come into town. Louisiana has the best seafood, hands down. Just take my word for it. So my aunts that live in Texas don't get to eat good seafood except for when they visit. My dad likes to make something yummy for them that they don't normally get to eat. He makes grilled and fried fish and shrimp fettuccine, which is cheesy noodles and shrimp, it's wonderful. Every Sunday night we eat dinner with my grandparents; because my mawmaw and pawpaw cook breakfast on Sunday mornings, we usually cook dinner. And by we, I mean my dad. Crawfish is very popular down here and rightfully so. Most people that live in Louisiana eat crawfish annually. This food is a part of Louisiana culture making it part of my own personal culture. In the spring, my uncle always has crawfish boils at his house. My dad likes to go help clean the crawfish and boil them. Personally, I think they make the best tasting crawfish ever but I'm biased. The type of food my dad makes is symbolic of another part of my culture. Going to family functions is part of who I am because my family is a part of me. The food my mom cooks is very different than the kind of food my dad and my mawmaw makes. But it is symbolic of another part of my culture that is equally important. She likes to try different things, mostly healthy stuff. I was kind of a picky eater before my mom started to try different things for dinner. Now, I enjoy trying new

foods. We make things like zucchini chips, sweet potato hash browns, and vegetable stir-fry. Her taste is very modern. My sisters hate that everything she cooks is healthy but I like trying different foods. I think that her taste in food and what she cooks has influenced me because it has made me more adventurous. I think I'm more willing to try new things because I've been forced to try new foods that I normally wouldn't eat. My mom also likes to cook things that she ate as a child such as chili, lasagna, and pork chops. I feel like these foods represent a part of my culture because it gives me a glimpse of my mother's childhood and of her parents. Both of my mom's parents have passed away so I don't really know them that well. By eating some of the same things my mom ate as a child, it shows me a part of her parents. It's really cool how through food, I get to know another part of my family.

So I am exactly what I eat. Food is an important part of Louisiana culture and my own personal culture. The different foods that I eat show different parts of my culture. The food my mawmaw makes represents one part of me, the food my dad makes represents another part, and the food my mom cooks represents yet another part. They are all different, just like I have different aspects of culture that make up my personal culture. These foods are all different but they are all food. And I have very different parts of my culture that make me who I am.

Score: Exemplary

Annotation:

From the beginning, this exemplar demonstrates an Exemplary effort at explaining a personal sense of culture and identity. The engaging and thoughtful introduction is both personal and universal in its appeal and draws the reader into the essay. The exemplar provides a well-considered, non-formulaic structure in which ideas are supported by personal examples of “family traditions” surrounding food, and specific, vivid details, and descriptions about food and family, such as the detail that her grandmother makes everything from “shrimp and grits to bread pudding” and “pawpaw fries the bacon” all of which leads to the satisfying conclusion, “I am exactly what I eat.” The writing is characterized by a strong sense of cohesion supported by a variety in sentence structure and transitions that add interest and demonstrates a clear, consistent command of language in which ideas are introduced and connected smoothly and naturally. The precise language creates a distinctive voice of appreciation and enjoyment. Minor missteps in sentence structure do not detract from an engaging presentation of an identity focused on food.

Grade10 Unit 1 EA 1 Writing About Cultural Identity

Score: Proficient

Trying to define cultural identity can be difficult to many. Your cultural identity can be influenced greatly by not only you and your family, but greatly by your surroundings growing up as a child and what you are exposed to as a young adult as well. I was born to a primarily southern family with parents that were born in both South Carolina and Alabama, while owning a business in a small farm town in the most northwest corner of Florida, there has been a great amount of influence on my values and beliefs. Whether it involves the foods I like to eat, or the church I attend on Sundays, or the sports I play, even the way we vote during the elections. Your culture can greatly influence who you are as a person, inside and out.

Being from the south, there are a great amount of stereotypes that face you not only when you leave the comfort of biscuits and gravy, but also to those around you at home that do not believe the same way as you, like those raised in different parts of the country for instance. After being raised in a family John Deere tractor business, the first thing I am associated with is "Did you drive your tractor to school?" No matter where I go or who I'm with, a stereotype never fails to find me, but in a way, they have helped shape what I believe my cultural identity to be.

Along with stereotypes, being from the south also comes with a distinctive outlook on life. We tend to separate ourselves from the rest of the world, almost like our own little country. We are more focused around morals and religious values when it comes to voting on certain leaders or laws. Religion has a major influence on my cultural identity, since we tend to base our lifestyle around it. Not only does religion have an affect on my cultural identity, but also the morals you gain by growing up in the south have an effect also, like going for more conservative leaders or mainly to the more republican side. This is clearly visible in many of my familys choices.

Cultural Identity can be determined by many factors, like your surroundings or your environment you have grown up in, or that's how I feel your cultural identity is determined. My cultural identity is more diverse than I may realize, but the main way mine is determined is by growing up in the south to a southern family. This has had a great influence on my life that will continue to influence my choices and values throughout my life.

Score: Proficient

Annotation:

In this Proficient exemplar, the topic of cultural identity is introduced in a thoughtful introduction about the impact of family and community on cultural identity. The introduction is followed up by a purposeful development of these aspects as an influence on cultural identity. The exemplar essay is strongly focused, with solid and unique types of evidence to support a discussion of cultural identity. A sense of personal identity is quite vivid and clear. The essay establishes and maintains a consistent academic tone and voice that strives to explain a personal sense of culture. The exemplar uses the context of stereotyping to introduce details that define an identity, then goes on to try to define the impact of community on daily family life. A strong sense of coherence derives from the clear focus and development, and the introduction and conclusion create a sense of completeness in the essay. The essay contains some variety in sentences, but errors in sentence structure and some infelicitous phrasing create an inconsistency in the use of language that does not detract from the overall proficient performance.

Grade10 Unit 1 EA 1 Cultural Identity

Score: Emerging

Have you ever seen someone act like they are one thing but they are not? This is basically all my life wrapped in one piece.

Well, everybody thinks I'm the city girl that doesn't like to get muddy. Think again, I'm the total opposite. On my weekends, I mud ride, fish, and hunt (when it is hunting season). I spend my summer like that to unless I'm dedicating my life to the sports I play. I was born and raised in the country.

I'm tired of walking around at a country concert and seeing people wearing fake cowboys' boots. Why would you waste your life acting like someone you're not? You could really just like country music and be yourself. Sometime people wear those type of things, to look cute! You can look cute by wearing who you are and not to be something you're not.

They are so many people that are different on the inside. Take me for instance I am a total different person than what people see me as. Just be you!

Score: Emerging

Annotation:

This Emerging essay about cultural identity is characterized by a strong clear voice and an unfortunate lack of focus and insufficient evidence to clearly explain a sense of cultural identity. The identification as a country girl is introduced, but never sufficiently supported by clear and fully developed examples and details. Ultimately, the essay is not clearly about culture. Even though the essay has a clear beginning, middle and end, the organization is inconsistent in that the second body paragraph goes off in a different direction and highlights the lack of focus and development in the ideas of the essay. A lack of any transitions indicates the lack of attention to creating coherence. Though the essay demonstrates an adequate command of organization and a general command of language conventions and a consistent tone, this is not sufficient to raise the level of achievement.

Grade 10 Unit 1 EA 1 Writing About My Cultural Identity

Score: Incomplete

Based on my looks and I wear people often have an idea that I am very disrespectful and lazy teenager. What most people do not see past my clothes and looks is that I am a very respectful teen and I try my best to stay away from trouble, most teens in my age group are what people would ordinarily say (lazy and disrespectful) that is another reason why I get connected and associated with the judgment, I and a few like me are very different from that in many various ways such as football players. Football players play a sport that requires you to have a large amount of self-control and an unlimited amount of respect for people who are over you. Teens in this day in time have done away with the basics of the saying of yes sir and no sir, as a football player we are taught and showed that the best way to show respect is by using these simple sayings. The basics of this all is that my cultural identity is far from what other people's preconceived thoughts say about me.

Score: Incomplete

Annotation:

This essay is a clear example of an incomplete effort to “explain your cultural identity.” Unfortunately, a lack of command of conventions obscures ideas to such a degree that it is difficult for the reader to make meaning. The essay organization does not represent a multi-paragraph development of the two major ideas of the exemplar. The essay has glimmers of a focus, but fails to deliver on the contradiction between appearances and realities. The identification and explanation of the culture of a football player is vague and unfocused with little supportive detail beyond a “way to show respect” by saying, “yes sir and no sir.” Coherence and connectedness of the ideas are absent without a central focus or transitions.