**The Danger of a Single Story – Chimananda Adichie**

Word Association Game

Write down your first impressions (1-3 words) based on the following words:

***Male, Female, Local, Foreigner, Buddhist, Muslim, Christian, Hindu, Young, Old, Ugly, Beautiful, Disabled, Homosexuality, Heterosexuality, Foreign Domestic Worker, Construction Worker, Sex Worker***

Take note of the following questions throughout her speech:

1. What is a “single story”?
2. Why is it important to think about a “single story”?
3. What is the author’s intent? (What is she trying to do with this speech?)

**Part 1**: Watch video [‘Chimamanda Adichie’s The Danger of a Single Story’](http://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story.html) [18:49] (TEDGlobal, Oct 2009) from [00:00 – 07.35].

Based on Part 1 of the video:

* How is your perception influenced by the world around you? (ie. What stories are you told in books, movies, pictures, music, the news, or by friends and family?)
* Chimamanda Adichie speaks of “how impressionable and vulnerable we are in the face of a story, particularly as children”. What stories did you grow up reading/listening to? Could you identify with the characters in these stories? Why? Why not? Did these stories influence your perception of the world?
* Consider how “our lives, our cultures, are composed of many overlapping stories”. What do you think this means?

**Part 2**: Continue the video from [07:36 - End]

Respond to one of these questions/quotes from the TED video, in writing:

* What role does the media play in perpetuating or challenging stereotypes?
* Discuss the ways family background, religion, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, nationality, age, socio-economic status and other group and cultural influences contribute to the development of one’s perceptions. How does literature perpetuate this view?
* “The single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story.” – Chimamanda Adichie
* “Stories matter. Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign, but stories can also be used to empower and to humanize. Stories can break the dignity of a people, but stories can also repair that broken dignity.” – Chimamanda Adichie
* “It is impossible to talk about the single story without talking about power. There is a word, an Igbo word, that I think about whenever I think about the power structures of the world, and it is “nkali.” It’s a noun that loosely translates to “to be greater than another.” Like our economic and political worlds, stories too are defined by the principle of nkali: How they are told, who tells them, when they’re told, how many stories are told, are really dependent on power.” – Chimamanda Adichie

