

SECOND WRITING ASSIGNMENT

Preparation: Readings by Sanders, White, Rich, Steele, Cisneros, and Noda to prepare to discuss two or more of your traits, roles or identities.

Brainstorm and freewrite in class, talk with others, and fastwrite an idea draft before making it “reader-friendly.”

Due Date: Class #8, at the start of class. Revision: Class #10

Length: About 3-5 typed, double-spaced pp. (1000 words). Bring three copies to class.

Audience: Readers of a magazine like *The Culture Crosser* or our end-of semester course anthology

Purpose: To explore and reveal something about the complexities of your identity(ies).

Using conflicting cultural or ethnic roles, expectations, and models, identify and explore an apparent contradiction in yourself and attempt to explain the tension between two aspects of your identity (i.e., Steele’s being middle-class and Black, Rich’s being split by her Jewish/non-Jewish heritage, the command never to tell and Kingston’s relation of her aunt’s story.)

Topic: Examine traits from a list you generate either in class or on your own. Pick two or more traits that seem to be in conflict, or opposite sides of the same coin, or connected in some (usually contradictory) way. For example, you may feel obliged to be a dutiful, obedient, and respectful oldest son in family situations but have a tough and cool school persona. Why and how did these roles develop? Explore and explain the tension(s) between them.

Tips: Look at or remember a photograph that reveals you in one of your roles; discuss that role and the one in conflict with it. For example, if you find a picture that makes you look obedient and dutiful, discuss the context, causes, rewards and costs of that role and the other “you” in greatest contrast to or conflict with it. If a picture shows you looking triumphant, confident, and secure, examine the anxious side of your feelings in order to reveal both sides, or some of the continuum, of your identity. Perhaps you will find a unifying trait.

Pick a **title**; you may begin with a provisional one, but re-consider it after writing.

Use anything that catches your imagination in the readings or discussion as a starting point. It might be a feeling or suggestion instead of any ethnic similarity; perhaps you can find a double bind or instance of double vision in your life.