# English Studies 12

**The Danger of the Single Story by Chimamanda Adichie**

Pre-reading:

Define the following words:

1. Assumption
2. Stereotype
3. Prejudice
4. Discrimination
What is the relationship between the first four definitions?
5. Patronizing
6. Dispossess
7. Pity
8. Empathy
9. Abject

Questions: Answer using **evidence** from the text. Your writing should be visually different from the questions.

1. Adiche is from Nigeria; why might she have read British and American books? How did those books inform her world view? (1, 2)
2. Why does being “impressionable” in the face of stories mean being “vulnerable”? Are these bad things? Explain. (4, 5)
3. Why could Adiche not imagine Fide’s family as capable of having something ‘beautiful’? (7, 8)
4. What is *ironic* about Adiche’s discussion of Fide, his family and, ‘years later,’ her American roommate? (9, 10, 12)
5. What is the Adiche’s professor implying with the statement that Adiche’s novel is not “authentically African”? How is this *ironic*? (15)
6. What example does Adiche give as evidence of her own guilt in creating “the single story”? According to Adiche, how do you create the single story? (16, 17)
7. “…show people as one thing, as only one thing, over and over again, and that is what they become.” Do you agree? Discuss and give an example to support your opinion. (17)
8. “It is impossible to talk about the single story without talking about power.” In what ways is storytelling a form of power? What examples does Adiche give? (18, 19)
9. Explain why Adiche does not have a single story of America. How does she use *satire* to make her point about Americans having a single story of Africa? ((20, 21)
10. In paragraphs 24, 26, and 32, Adiche states the purpose of her story (*theme - thesis*). Find the most important parts in these paragraphs. Can you summarize them?
11. In what ways do “single stories” impact our own identities, how we view others, and the choices we make?
12. Brainstorm a list of single stories; have people created ‘single stories’ about you? In what way are these stories incomplete?
13. Other than the use of satire in various parts of the narrative, where else does Adichie manipulate the text for rhetorical effect? Highlight/label/annotate the spots. Use ***The Essay as a Genre*** under Writing Strategies in the Eddy Documents Tab to help you in this process.