

Activity: *Danger of a Single-Story* Ted Talk and Discussion

Author of Lesson plan: Mecia Lockwood, *Assistant Director for Leadership Development*

NSE Goal Focus: Cultural Humility

Activity Goal: The students will be guided to reflect on the danger of holding ‘single stories’ about people and cultures.

Activity Objectives:

- 1) Students will gain a greater understanding of their own internalized stereotypes
- 2) Students will recognize the importance of seeking out stories from others in creating an inclusive community.

Materials *Danger of a Single Story*, Ted Talk by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie -

https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=en

Modification: Can be done in person or online. If online, host can share screen to view video and breakout rooms can be used to encourage pair-share conversation.

Caution: Students may stay surface level rather than digging in. Help students flesh out their ideas and dig a little deeper as they are sharing insights. This is a great activity to do after an ice breaker so students can open up and be primed to discuss.

Activity:

- Watch the Ted Talk linked above, or have students watch on their own before class.
- Have students silently jot down first thoughts and feelings after watching the video. They should also reflect on the following two questions.
 - What are “single-stories” others have believed about you? Why was the story incomplete?
 - What are “single stories” you have believed about others?
- Students should then break into groups of 2-3 and share their stories.
- After sharing, have groups join another group (groups of 4-6 now) and discuss the following.
 - What is the “danger” in these single stories?
 - How are these stereotypes perpetuated?
 - Adichie shares “Power is the ability not just to tell the story of another person, but to make it the definitive story of that person.” Who has the power to tell the story in the places where you work/ serve/learn?
 - What can you do to interrupt single stories?
- Have each small group share one important idea with the whole.
 - “What is one idea that stood out in your conversation?”

Reflection Prompts:

- What is one thing you can commit to do to combat stereotypes?