

“My Nigerian Culture”

Abimbola Ogundipe

Abimbola Ogundipe is a former City Tech student. She wrote this essay in her ENG 1101 class and it was published in the City Tech Writer 5 (2010), City Tech’s annual publication of “outstanding student writing from all disciplines.” In this piece, Ogundipe questions one of the long-held traditions of her culture.

Vocabulary...

elders (n)

knelt (v)

Reading Questions...

1. How do the narrator’s parents react when she questions the customs of her culture? Why?
2. According to the narrator, are the same things expected of boys and girls in this Nigerian culture?

Discussion Questions...

1. Does the narrator really care about the appearance of her knees? Why does she focus on them?
2. How does the narrator’s life change when her family immigrates to the US? Why? How does she feel about these changes?

Activities and Assignments...

1. In this text, Ogundipe looks at her own cultural practices critically, for what seems to be the first time. Write a short essay that looks at an aspect of your culture critically. Think about the underlying reasons for this practice and what consequences there might be if you openly challenged it.
2. Ogundipe focuses on the difference between her and her brothers in this Nigerian culture. Can you think of the way gendered differences or expectations play out in your home, family, neighborhood, or community? Write a short essay that looks at how gender works in your life. Why do you think these differences are based on gender? Do you agree with this gender-based system? Why?



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