

Cultural Assessment
Louisa Garcia

Family Cultural Communication Practices

1. What value did your parents/grandparents/guardians place on reading and writing? At home? At school? What were their thoughts about education? What kinds of reading/writing did they do? What stories did they tell you about reading/writing?

My mother placed a great value on reading and writing in English when she refused to teach me Spanish for fear that it would be detrimental to my mastering the English language. She always wanted me to do well in school and get good grades. She frowned upon bad grades and I was grounded severely. As far as reading, I recall my mother reading frequently. English was her second language, but I remember the books she read and they were fairly large and in English. I don't remember any stories she told me on reading or writing, but I do remember her buying me any book I wanted. I used to read very often as a child and once I reached high school, I just stopped. When I did pick up books again, just after high school, I started reading from one of my mother's favorite authors and so she literally bought me every single book she could buy from that author. If she had lived long enough, she probably would have bought me every one of his books (in case you were wondering, the author is Stephen King).

Formal School Cultural Communication Practices

3. How did you feel about the reading/writing in middle and high school?
For what purposes did you write and to what kinds of audiences?

I read lots of books through middle school and stopped during high school unless it was required reading from teachers. As far as writing goes, that actually went up during high school. I was part of this innovative class that combined english and history class together and so we were required to read then write on history. Once we wrote our paper, we present it to the class, which was double the size of a regular class. I took full advantage of this to not only improve on my writing, but also my public speaking because I suffered from stage fright and was looking to overcome it.

Current School Cultural Communication Practices

5. What kind of reading/writing/speaking activities do you do in college? (e.g., passing notes, writing essays, reading novels) What kinds of reading/writing activities are your favorite? Your least favorite?

Now that I am in college, I try to read as much as I possibly can when the time permits. Over the summer, I was able to finish my first book entirely in French and I was able to finish reading another novel I started last summer. Other than the required reading by professors, it's been hard to read books I want.

As for writing, there is plenty of that. I have to write for my campaign classes, they require that I write body copy, taglines and headlines. Being vice president of the Art Director's Club @ city tech, requires me to write articles for our design publication, as

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well as proof read through fellow members work and also write proposals and scripts for various things.

In terms of speaking, well my stage fright has all but diminished. Presenting a speech in front of crowds, large or small, barely puts a sweat on my brow. Through numerous opportunities to speak in front of club members and in front of large crowds for our speaker series, Meet the Pros, I have finally broken the fear spell and I am finally comfortable about public speaking. I still get a little nervous, but it's nothing compared to the way I was before.

Historical/Social/Familial Cultural Communication Practices

8. What important historical/political/social events were happening in your state, country, or around the world when you were a child growing up? When you were a teenager? Please list as many of these as possible—especially those that shaped your literacy practices/values.