

Cultural
Identity
Autobiograph
y



Ethnicity/Nationality

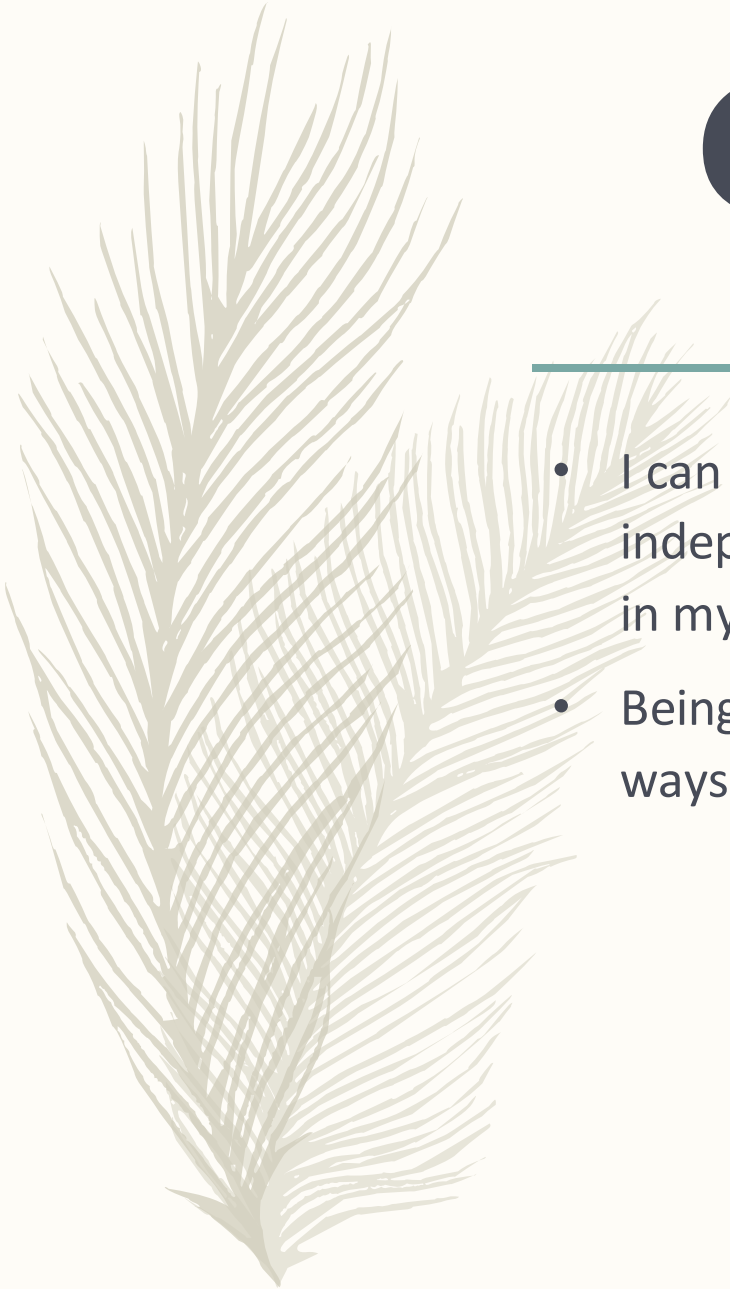
- My culture was not something I thought about daily. Growing up and attending a Catholic school mostly everyone was Italian and had the same beliefs as me. From attending church weekly, celebrating the same religious holidays, cooking, eating, and spending a lot of time with family.
- Then I attended a public school for the first time in high school. I learned about many other cultures and made friends of so many different ethnicities. I was able to learn all about their traditions and ways of life.
- Attending a public school really opened my eyes to realize how everyone is not the same and that's okay because everyone is unique in certain ways.
- Now being a teacher, I know how important it is to take the time to get to know your students. It is so important to give students the opportunity to really express their ethnicity that way I can better support them as their educator.

Religion

- My mom and dad were both Catholic so generally I was raised Catholic as well. My parents wanted the best education for their children, and they enrolled my sister, my brother, and myself in Catholic school for all our elementary and middle school years.
- I consider myself fortunate to have gone to a private school for 8 years knowing now that many families do not have the means to send their children to those kinds of schools.
- My parents wanted their children to know the importance of their religion and the power of God, so they believed Catholic school was the best choice.
- Catholic schools tend to be smaller so the student to teacher ratio tends to make for a better learning environment. In my opinion, I feel like I benefited from that kind of learning.
- Had my parents not raised us to follow our faith I do not know if I would be the same person, I am today.

Gender Identity

- I can thank my mother for teaching me and molding me into the strong independent woman I am today. My mother has taught me to have confidence in myself and to be proud of who I am.
- Being a woman in the education field has benefited me and helped me in many ways.



Age

- Age was never something I thought of until I started working as a paraprofessional in a high school. The high school I worked at allowed the special education students to attend school up until they were 21.
- I became a para at the age of 20 so I was very close in age with many of the students. In fact, I was turning 21 the same week one of my students was turning 21.
- Being so close in age with these high school students really benefited both of us. I was able to relate to them and they were able to confide in me not just as a paraprofessional but also as a friend.
- High school years could be tough on students especially special education students, so I always tried to be there and be the support they needed. Especially if they didn't receive that support from anyone at home.

Social Class

- My family and I grew up in the middle class. My father was a detective with the New York City Police Department and my mother was a paraprofessional working in a New York City Public School.
- We were never rich and never poor, we always lived within our means and were comfortable. My parents did whatever it took to make sure me, my brother, and sister had a roof over our heads, food on the table, clothes to wear and everything in between that we may have wanted.
- We were always raised to grateful for what we have because there are children out there with a lot less. My parents worked very long hard hours to be able to send me and my siblings to a private Catholic school. My parents believed we would gain the most and best education from a private school. Education was and still is to this day very important in my house.





Social Class Continued...

- Ever since I started working, first as a paraprofessional then as a teacher, I really started to realize how privileged I was to have grown up in a white middle class family.
- As I began working in these schools that were in neighborhoods that looked different than where I had grown up, I realized how fortunate I really am to have had the opportunities that my parents provided for me.
- Now knowing how privileged I was I take that into accountability while teaching my own students. I want my students to feel comfortable to come to me and be able to tell me things that go on in their lives.
- Teaching students of different social classes has opened my eyes to realize not everyone grew up the way I had.

Final Statement

