

Autobiographical education/ethnic narrative

In a 1.5-2 page single-spaced paper, describe the community and schools where you grew up. Include in your narrative (write in the first person, "I"):

- (1) your ethnic background and how that influenced you in 2-7;
- (2) your family, and
- (3) the school(s) that you attended;
- (4) What experiences have you had that impacted and influenced you the most?
- (5) What was school like for you?
- (6) What prompted you to consider teaching as a career?

Ethnic background:

"Our kids are culturally confused. I stem from a long line Italians on my dad's side and even longer line of Mexicans and Spaniards from my mother. But ethnically speaking, I AM NOT WHITE."

"As I write this I am realizing that growing up in a white society might have influenced me to look on this somewhat negatively.... Wow!"

"After our discussion in class on white privilege, I am sure that I've benefited from most of the items on the list without ever having lightened my skin. I am appreciative to my parents for expecting more of me in my education, but it strikes me that I have come to wonder about my own race, my family, how its affected my thinking, and every day life."

"I did not realize there is a difference from small towns to big cities, when talking about minorities. I did not realize this until I got to college and I did not really understand this difference because I felt that everyone had the same outlook as I did – from a large city. Most of my friends are from small towns, had zero to one African Americans in their school. It was uncommon for them to know an Asian, African American, Hispanic, etc., and for me it was the exact opposite."

Experiences Impact/influenced you the most?

"The day a bunch of the "hicks" put him in a trashcan upside down. He is a Korean, adopted, very nice, talented person. All the kids saw him as a little kid that was different that they could pick on. Needless to say, this bugged me a great deal, and I considered him my little brother.

"As a biracial student, I've had the amazing privilege in being involved with two completely different cultures. My White heritage taught me farming, ranching, work ethic, and racism. My White grandfather taught me at an early age how things were for some ethnic groups. I knew then, that I did not want to treat people this way."

"I come from a family with strong ethnic ties to Eastern Europe. Specifically, my ethnicity stems from Mennonite, Amish, or Old Order religious groups. My family was forced from Imperial Russia during Stalin's reign due to their pacifist beliefs. I understood from a very early age that material wealth did not matter as much as family, friends, and freedom. This story and may others like it, influenced me as I was growing up."

“Poverty and adoption. Poverty because I had to live in it daily – went without heat or basic food. Adoption because it gave me direction.”

Prompted your to consider teaching as a Career?

“I started in engineering but I was never really satisfied. I always knew that I wanted to be a teacher. I wanted to have the chance to change a life, to make someone a better person.”

“When I helped my friend prep for tests, I would grade his work before he handed it in, making comments and suggestions. I could see how he benefited from my help. I was seeing someone learn because of what I did and that is a one of a kind feeling!”

“Art opened a new world for me. I want kids to see things they have made first hand. Teaching art has no government testing, you teach design. Teaching will be something I know I will be able to get up everyday and be happy doing for many years to come.”

“As much as I want anything in the world, I want my future students to not only learn something new every day, but see how exciting learning something can be fun.”