

### ■ Activity 3

**Critically analyse the speech of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and discuss the dangers of a single story in perceiving people and events in the world. Prepare a write-up based on the points of your discussion.**

It is true that a single story about something won't give us a clear picture of it. In her speech the Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie explains her experiences in this regard. The only thing she knew about their house boy Fide was that they were extremely poor. But when she visited their house, she was taken aback to see a beautifully patterned basket of dyed raffia, made by Fide's brother. Till then their poverty was her single story about them. When she went to the USA for higher studies her American roommate was shocked to hear Adichie speaking English so well. She was all the more surprised when Adichie produced her tape of Mariah Carey. Her roommate had a single story about Africa. They were uneducated, uncivilized people to her.

Adichie's professor told her that the characters in her novel were not authentically African; they were somewhat like the Americans. To him the Africans should be starving and not knowing how to drive a car. In her speech she points out that all these experiences reveal the danger of a single story.

**Adichie talks about the 'no possibilities' in this single story. What does she mean by this?**

ഈ ഏക കഥയിൽ 'സാധ്യതകളില്ലായ്മയെക്കുറിച്ച്' അഡീച്ചെയ് പറയുന്നു. ഇതുകൊണ്ട് അവൾ അർത്ഥമാക്കുന്നതെന്താണ്?

Adichie says that in her roommate's single story there is no possibility of Africans being similar to her in any way, no possibility of feelings more complex than pity, no possibility of a connection as human equals.

From this sentence we can understand that the opinion of the whites about the Africans is very bad. They consider the Africans as lower class people and do not even consider them as human beings.

**Write a paragraph on Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's experience in the United States of America during her stay here for her studies. 6**

When Adichie was 19, she left Nigeria to go for higher studies in the United States. Her American roommate was shocked to hear Adichie speaking excellent English. She never thought that English could be the official language of Nigeria. She was again shocked when Adichie produced a tape of Mariah Carey.

Her roommate had a single idea about the African people. To her they were groups of tribals, uneducated and uncultured people who knew only tribal music and folk dances. So she maintained a patronizing mentality to Adichie. She could never think that Africans were equal to her. Adichie never blamed her roommate. She had already known the danger of a single story. One of Adichie's professors once told her that her novel was not authentically African. He told her that her characters were educated middle class men. In his opinion, to make them authentic they should have been poor and uneducated. Adichie realized that the professor also had a single story about the Africans, which was incomplete and partially true.