

■ 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.

1. Imagine you enjoyed reading Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's speech 'The Danger of a Single Story' and write a letter to her expressing your appreciation. Draft the likely letter. 5

Pleasant Villa

Broadway

Ernakulam

28th August 2019

Dear Adichie Auntie

I am Rajeev, a 10th standard student of St. Albert's School. I have greatly enjoyed reading your speech 'The Danger of a Single Story.' I really appreciate your style of presenting the idea. Your words are highly impressive. The characters Fide, your American roommate and the professor are truly very interesting. Now I can also understand the danger of a single story in my life too.

Once again, I would like to express my appreciation, admiration and thanks.

Love

Rajeev

2. Adichie's visit to Fide's family was a great learning experience for her. After reaching home, she jots down her feelings in the diary. Write the likely diary entry. 5

Sunday September 15, 2019

What a surprise! Only thing mother told me about Fide was that they were poor. Couldn't believe that Fide's brother could make such a beautiful basket. He is an excellent craftsman. Could think of a single story about them, their poverty. Now I understand the danger of a single story. It is a lesson to me. It's an unforgettable day in my life.