Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie: The danger of a single story

http://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story.html

1. **First Impressions:** Watch the first 22 seconds of the video, up to “and I would like to tell you a few personal stories about what I like to call the danger of the single story.” Pause the video and ask students about their first impressions:
   a. Who do we think this woman is, based on what she has said, how she appears, etc?
   b. What do you think she will talk about?
   c. What drives these predictions and ideas about her identity?

2. **Video:** As students watch the speech, have them note down one of the following (your choice):
   a. The assumptions that Adichie makes about others, that others make about her
   b. The moments that surprise the students or stand out to them in some way

3. **Discussion:**
   a. What stood out to you? What surprised you? Why? (Be honest; it's a safe space!)
   b. What assumptions and stereotypes did Adichie engage with?
   c. How does the media influence the “stories” that we hear about others?
   d. How could we overcome these barriers to get at the “balance of stories” that Adichie hopes for?

4. **Follow-up activity: Our Destination**
   a. What “story” do we have about where we’re going? What do you think it might be like?
   b. With a partner, imagine what the trip might be like: where you will live, what the people will be like. Once you make a list, think about where those impressions come from. The media? Previous travels? Parental stories? Courses they have taken?
   Add “source hashtags” to each impression in their list:
   e.g.: “They won’t speak English. #Parents”
   “Rainy season. #5th-GradeScience”
   c. Discussion: What stereotypes do we have of our destination? What are our sources?
   d. How can we go beyond or expand on these sources and get an authentic understanding of the place we are going to visit? (For next week, find an article, a website – any cultural artifact that will give us a different “story” of our destination.)

5. **Sharing, the following week:** take turns sharing the cultural artifacts you’ve found and discussing how these might broaden your understanding of the culture you will be visiting.