

## Q4 ~ Perspective: Blue Tattoo & Single Story

Consider how canonical literature may position white characters in relation to those of different ethnicities.

Analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone.

1. Watch the short biography of [\*Olive Oatman: Life among the Mohave\*](#) and answer the questions below:

QUESTION	ANSWER
How are white people portrayed in this text?	The white people in this text were portrayed as the victims of Native American brutality. Olive Oatman was a victim of Native American captivity. During this period, the Native Americans tattooed her chin with a tribal marking.
How are Native Americans portrayed?	The Native Americans are portrayed as savages who attacked the Oatman family. When they first confronted the family, they demanded supplies, which the Oatmans could not provide because they barely had enough food for themselves. The Native Americans then escalated the conflict, leading to the death of all but three people.
What stood out from the biography?	Something that stood out to me from the biography was Olive Oatman's vivid account of seeing her family's bodies. She said that they were bloody, and scattered across the ground. This portrayed the brutality of the attacks the Native Americans used against the white people.
What details seem important?	Details that I believe were important from this video were the events leading up to the Oatman family's confrontation with a Native American tribe, such as leaving their group to travel alone, taking a shortcut to the destination, being overrun by the Native Americans, and being forced to give the Native Americans goods. The Oatman family made critical decisions that increased the chance that they would encounter danger while traveling and be attacked.
Make a connection between Oatman's biography and Mary Rowlandson's captivity narrative.	The Oatman biography and Mary Rowlandson's captivity narrative can be connected through the savage and brutal actions of the Native Americans against the

	white people. In both accounts, white women were kidnapped and forced to live with the Native Americans.
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2. Watch *[The Danger of a Single Story](#)* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and answer the questions below:

QUESTION	ANSWER
What is a "single story"? Who tells these "single stories?"	A "single story" is a term used to describe one side of a story, told by one perspective. People who tell these "single stories" create biases because they only tell one side of a story instead of both/all. It is not an objective account of what happened.
What did Adichie's roommate believe about Africa and people who live in Africa? Why?	Adichie's roommate believed that Africa and its people lived in poverty and destitution, and that there were no similarities in life experiences between her and Adichie. For example, Adichie's roommate thought that Africans did not listen to Western music, but rather cultural music. Adichie's roommate felt this way because she believed a single story about Africa, in which Africans lived in poverty, and were to be pitied.
What does Adichie say about her understanding of immigration in the United States? Why does she give this example?	In her story, Adichie describes her understanding of immigration in the United States through the stereotypes of Mexican immigrants. She had heard of Mexicans fleeing the healthcare systems, sneaking across the borders, and being arrested for doing so. She believed these stories were an accurate account of all immigrant experiences. Adichie uses this example to show that everyone can and most likely has believed a single story without realizing it.
Make a connection between Adichie's discussion and Mary Rowlandson's captivity narrative.	Adichie's discussion and Mary Rowlandson's captivity narrative can be connected through the idea of a single story. In Adichie's discussion, she describes her trip to Mexico, where she believed that the Mexican people were abusing the American healthcare system because of a single story she had heard. In Mary Rowlandson's captivity narrative, the audience only read about the captivity through her perspective as a white person from a white community, which leads the reader to believe that all Native Americans are savage, inhumane creatures from hell.

3. Make a connection between Oatman's biography, Adichie's discussion, and [Mary Rowlandson's captivity narrative](#).

Oatman's biography, Adichie's discussion, and Mary Rowlandson's captivity narrative can be connected through the idea of a single story. All three narratives shared accounts of a white person's encounter with a non-white person and culture. These perspectives focused on one side of the story and excluded the non-white perspective. As explained in Adichie's discussion, believing a single story is dangerous because it forms biases and stereotypes. Assumptions are then made based on these stereotypes, and influence the thoughts and behaviors of those who believe them. An example she used was a story from her time in college. Adichie was writing a story about Africans and was confronted by her professor who told her that her story was not authentic because the Africans were portrayed as too much like Western people. Adichie described the Africans as driving cars, while her professor said that they should be suffering and starving. He had fallen for the "danger" of a single story, and believed that all of Africa was in poverty. Similarly, Oatman's biography and Rowlandson's narrative portray the Native Americans as evil, bloodthirsty, inhumane beings, rather than people who were also victimized by the white people.