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***Why did the assignment Nikole Hannah-Jones’ teacher gave her make her feel ashamed? How could the teacher have improved the assignment with the history of her Black students in mind?***

Claim	
Evidence	
Reasoning	

Excerpts from Podcast:

“When I was a kid — it must have been in fifth or sixth grade. Our teacher gave us an assignment. It was a social studies class, and we were learning about different places that people came from, and this was her way of kind of telling the story of the great American melting pot. So she told us all to research our ancestral land and to write a small report about it, and then to draw a flag. I remember kind of looking up and making eye contact with the other black girl who was in the class, because we didn’t really have an ancestral land that we knew of. Slavery had made it so that we didn’t know where we came from in Africa. We didn’t have a specific country. And we could say that we were from the whole continent, but even so, there’s no such thing as an African flag. And so I remember going to the globe by my teacher’s desk — it was on the windowpane along the left side of the classroom — and spinning it to the continent of Africa and just picking a random African country.

So I went back to my desk, and I drew that random African country’s flag, and I wrote a report about it. And I felt ashamed. I felt ashamed, one, because I was lying, but I also felt ashamed because I felt like I should have some other country, and that all the other kids could trace their roots elsewhere, and I could only trace my roots to the country that had enslaved us.

I wish now that I could go back and talk to my younger self and tell her that she should not be ashamed, that this is her ancestral home, that she should be as proud to be an American as her dad was, and that she should boldly and proudly draw those stars and stripes and claim this country as her own.”

[TRANSCRIPT 0:00/42:56](#)

[Episode 1: The Fight for a True Democracy Hosted by Nikole Hannah-Jones](#)